Harmonizing Discursive Worlds: The Life and Times of Abu Al-Hasan Al-Harrali (D. 638/1241)

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Harmonizing Discursive Worlds: The Life and Times of
Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ḥarrālī (d. 638/1241)

A dissertation presented
by
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to
Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the subject of
Islamic Intellectual History

Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

April 2019
Harmonizing Discursive Worlds: The Life and Times of
Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ḥarrālī (d. 638/1241)

ABSTRACT
This dissertation explores the intellectual and spiritual biography of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ḥarrālī (d. 638/1241), a Sufi-oriented polymath from the Maghrib who remains obscure in the Euro-American academy despite his considerable influence on a variety of fields within the Islamic tradition. Utilizing primary biographical, prosopographical, and annalistic sources, the present study identifies the various legist, theological, and mystical circles in which Ḥarrālī moved, including networks of teachers, associates, and students spread out across various political and social environments of the 12th and 13th century Arabic-speaking Islamic world.
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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This dissertation sheds light on the life and times of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ḥarrālī (d. 638/1241), whose highly ambulant scholarly career played out across multiple geographical spaces, beginning in his homeland in the Far Maghrib under Almohad rule, on through Ḥafṣid Ifriqiyya, and Ayyūbid Egypt and Levant. Ḥarrālī also moved in a variety of intellectual circles: Mālikī legists, ḥadīth specialists, Ashʿarī theologians, and Sufi mystics. Between his career and his equally polyvalent corpus, Ḥarrālī moved in discursive worlds so diverse as to seem antithetical. He was regarded, for instance, as one of the leading Maghrib-born authorities of philosophy and theology of his time—conducting teaching sessions in which he would break down the Shifāʾ, among the densest tracts of the peripatetic philosopher Ibn Sīnā. But we also find in Ḥarrālī’s extant corpus relatively basic, pietist works, like his “Consummate belief in Mūḥammad pbuh” (al-Īmān al-tām bi-Muḥammad ‘alayh al-salām), a devotional work in praise of the prophet; or his “General advice for anyone who declares my lord is Allāh and is sincere” (al-Nuṣḥ al-‘āmm li-kulli man qāl rabī Allāh thumma istaqām), a socially-conscious homiletic which tenders spiritual council to multiple echelons of medieval Muslim society, from princes, doctors, and scholars, to artisans, porters, and even professional floggers. Another confounding example of Ḥarrālī’s is that, even as he debated legists on the minutiae of Mālikī fiqh, Ḥarrālī also authored highly abstract treatises on the science of letters, like his Lamḥah fī maʿrifat al-ḥurūf, which is cited as a primary source of inspiration for Shams al-maʿārif al-kubrā, one of the most widely read works on the subject of lettrism.

Perhaps Ḥarrālī’s major claim to fame is his contribution to the field of Qurʾān exegesis. His Qurʾān commentary (tafsīr) evinces the same typically synthetic approach, seamlessly combining aspects of the classical tafsīr tradition—atomistic etymological observations, for
instance—with meditations on the more subtle connotations of the divine discourse, the long-range intra-textual authorial intentions, and the spiritual psychology of the Qur’ān’s addressees. Ḥarrālī also penned a short but densely written treatise titled Miftāḥ al-bāb al-muqfal li fahm al-Qur’ān al-munzal (The key to the locked door for understanding the revealed Qur’ān). The Miftāḥ represents a kind of meta-discourse on the Qur’ān which attempts to formulate foundational principles (uṣūl) meant to inform how exegetes or even average readers should approach the sacred text. Ḥarrālī’s hermeneutical insights exerted a powerful influence on the Mamluk exegete Ibrāhīm al-Biqā’ī (d. 808/1460), who quotes from the two aforementioned works extensively in his widely read Qur’ān commentary Naẓm al-durar fī tanāsīh al-āyāt wa-al-suwar. Although pockets of Muslim scholarship have long known of Biqā’ī’s indebtedness to the writings of Ḥarrālī—a debt that includes some of the Naẓm’s most innovative insights like intra-textual Qur’ān concordance—modern scholarship has only recently begun to take cognizance of this fact.

The little in-depth attention that Ḥarrālī has received in the Euro-American academy has come from Paul Nwyia. As a student of Massignon, Nwyia was keenly interested in Sufi hermeneutics and was the first to recognize the importance of a large manuscript collection of Ḥarrālī’s works in the Bibliotheque Nationale of Paris—the very same collection that was owned by Biqā’ī, as it turns out. Nwyia was instinctively drawn to the hermeneutical insights in the Miftāḥ, particularly a section in which Ḥarrālī describes a way of understanding the polemical critique of the various religious communities in the Qur’ān—the qaṣaṣ and akhbār category of verses dealing with Jews, Christians, idolaters, and others—as figurative critiques of tendencies within the Islamic community itself. Nwyia was rightly impressed by this stunning literary concept coming out of a medieval Sunni scholar.
Unfortunately, Nwyia never got around to producing a full study of Ḥarrālī’s writings in his own lifetime. His most extensive piece on Ḥarrālī is a long article which, it turns out, is a collage of seminar notes put together by former colleagues of Nwyia and published posthumously under his name. The first half of the article gives an overview of Ḥarrālī’s biography and bibliography while the second half focuses on Ḥarrālī’s exposition on the use of figurative language in the Qur’ān. To this day, Nwyia’s article remains the most complete and competent study on Ḥarrālī in European language scholarship. Yet even this article hardly features on the radar of scholars of Sufism or tafsīr because the journal in which it appeared is itself quite obscure. Other publications by Nwyia only mention Ḥarrālī tangentially as for instance in his important work on the aphorisms (ḥikam) of Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh al-Iskandarī (d. 709-1309). The reason Nwyia features Ḥarrālī in his work is because the ḥikam attributed to Ḥarrālī constitute one of the early prototypes of that genre and a predecessor of the famous ḥikam of Ibn ‘Aṭā Allāh.

The initial impetus behind this dissertation was a desire to reprise and widen the scope of Nwyia’s work on Ḥarrālī by undertaking a textual study on the whole of the Miftāḥ. The idea was to draw on sources that Nwyia had overlooked, especially Ḥarrālī’s tafsīr which was he had presumed lost. In fact, a considerable portion of it has been preserved in Biqā’ī’s Naẓm. In 1997, these passages were extracted from the Naẓm and published in a separate edition by the

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2 The second half of the article (pp. 197-238) has its own title: “Language Figuratif et Figures Bibliques Dans L’exégèse Coranique de Ḥarrālī”. A separate publication, which appears to be a seminar or a conference report on the theme “Mystique Musulmane”, analyzes the figurative Qur’ān hermeneutics of both Ḥarrālī and ‘Alā’ al-Dawla al-Simmānī (d. 736/1336). The report was published in Annuaire de Ecole pratique des hautes études, Section sciences religieuses, vol. 86 (1977-8), pp. 273-83.

Moroccan scholar Khayyāṭī who, in the Arab world, is the leading proponent of reviving Ḥarrālī’s legacy. In addition, I managed to recover other manuscripts of Ḥarrālī which neither Nwyia nor Khayyāṭī had been aware of, including a commentary on the Divine Names. As well, an Arabic edition of an important commentary by Ḥarrālī on the ninety-nine names of the Prophet has recently appeared.⁴

Early on in the project, however, several closely inter-related problems presented themselves. Perhaps the most basic of these is that, as Nwyia himself had observed, large portions of Ḥarrālī’s writings are complex and dense—which is not to say cryptic in a contrived sense, in fact, even the most abstract of Ḥarrālī’s treatises are internally structured around a progressive, if often steep, pedagogical curve. But it is generally true that most of what Ḥarrālī has put to paper requires a slow reading pace. I have personally witnessed seasoned Arabic scholars and experts in Islamic philosophy rush into innocuous looking passages of the Ḥarrālīan corpus only to come to a disorienting stall and have to start over at a more moderate tempo. Nwyia is referring to the same problem when he points out:

Nous pensons que Ḥarrālī a une pensée très dense...mais cette densité n’exclut pas la clarité: car si on se donne la peine de lire lentement et attentivement les écrits do notre auteur, il arrive un moment où la lumière se fait et la concision de l’expression apparaît comme une qualité remarquable.⁵

Compounding this basic problem of the textual comprehension is the fact that Ḥarrālī’s writings are frustratingly devoid of references to sources. Throughout his extant corpus, one finds plenty of references to Qur’ān and ḥadīth, and these often helpfully and intuitively anchor Ḥarrālī’s ideas to the root texts of the Islamic tradition, to be sure. On occasion, Ḥarrālī might

⁴ Ḥarrālī’s Ibdā’ al-khafā’ fī sharḥ asmā’ al-Mustafā, which was published in a volume comprising the editions of two other works on the same subject by later authors (ed. Mazīdī, 2007).

⁵ Nwyia, Ḥarrālī, p. 170.
mention in passing the name of an important early Islamic scholar, like the founders of the
*madh’habs*. But it is not an exaggeration to say that, in the roughly one thousand folios of his
surviving corpus, Ḥarrālī not once makes reference to a notable intellectual figure who lived
within two or three hundred years of his own time. There are no references for example to the
doyen figures of theology (like Juwaynī or Ghazālī), of classical Sufism (like Muḥāsibī or
Qushayrī)—even though, as this this study will show, the legacy of all these figures profoundly
affected the environment from which Ḥarrālī emerged. Of references to his immediate teachers,
Ḥarrālī’s corpus includes a grand total of one, and even on that rare occasion we are given little
concrete sense of how this teacher shaped his ideas. Finally, it’s worth mentioning that Ḥarrālī’s
autobiographical voice is well-nigh non-existent. One struggles to point to a single example, in
the whole of Ḥarrālī’s corpus, where he refers to his own lived experience or even uses any kind
of reflexive pronoun.

The problem of situating Ḥarrālī within his immediate intellectual environment, and his
writings within the broader discursive currents of the Islamic tradition, is one which Nwyia
largely sidestepped. It’s possible that this was an area which he was planning to investigate but
passed away before he could do so. As it stands, Nwyia’s work on Ḥarrālī does not make
sustained use of biographical literature beyond the Ghubrīnī’s ‘*Unwān al-dirāyah*. His
scholarship strikes me as being more interested in the nature of Ḥarrālī’s thought as a Sufi in an
esoteric, closed system. However, when one reads the works of Ḥarrālī, one always has a
persistent nagging sense that he is in conversation with larger intellectual currents, but his
engagement is so indirect and impersonal that it is impossible to know with any certainty how
Ḥarrālī is positioning his own voice within that larger discourse, unless the reader possesses, to
use one of Ḥarrālī’s favorite epistemological concepts, a comprehensive and all-enveloping
knowledge (iḥtaḥah) of the whole of the Islamic intellectual tradition. Thus it became clear that if this project, as originally conceived, was to be successful, it would entail a deep dive into the biographical and prosopographical sources so as to provide as comprehensive a background as possible.

When I began delving into Ḥarrālī’s intellectual background, however, I discovered that many of the figures in his orbit were fascinating and influential subjects in their own right, and yet they too were virtually unknown. Indeed, over the multiple geographical contexts across which Ḥarrālī’s career played out, I regularly came across whole networks of scholars who remain, despite their importance, utterly obscure in the Euro-American academy and sometimes even in Arabic scholarship. Thus for example, Ḥarrālī’s kalām teachers were part of an usūl movement which, during the period of transition from late Almoravid to early Almohad rule, played a critical role in implanting in the Maghrib a brand of Ashʿarī theology infused with ṭasawwuf, built upon a bedrock of Mālikism—a proprietary intellectual amalgam which remains to this day foundational to the religious establishment of the Kingdom of Morocco. In Ifrīqiyya, I discovered that Ḥarrālī was mentored by important disciples of Abū Madyan, one of the foundational figures of early Maghribī Sufism. Yet the Madyanite disciples with whom Ḥarrālī associated form an important network of Ifrīqīyan figures, many of whom are still popularly celebrated even today, but who, from an academic standpoint, have gone virtually unnoticed, except for the one figure of ‘Abd al-ʿAzīz al-Mahdawī who might have also remained utterly obscure but for his tangential connection to the much-studied Ibn ʿArabī. In Bijāyah, a major center of learning in the Eastern Maghrib, Ḥarrālī tutored a number of brilliant students who propelled the city’s intellectual and cultural life to a remarkable pinnacle in the mid- and late 13th century. Some of Ḥarrālī’s students in Bijāyah and in Ifrīqiyya went on to teach the works of Ibn
Sīnā and compose works on Ashʿarī theology, some were prominent uṣūlis and qādīs who spearheaded important Mālikī reform movements under the Ḥafṣids, still others excelled as poets, calligraphers, and musicians.

Besides being an academically worthwhile exercise in and of itself, shedding extensive light on these obscure intellectual networks may also prove crucial for in-depth textual analyses of Ḥarrālī’s writings down the road. The situation that we face is that of a densely-written corpus, lacking in external references, whose author cannot be readily linked with any well-known intellectual currents, that is, none of Ḥarrālī’s immediate mentors and associates are household names that could be invoked for contextualizing purposes. The biographical literature, moreover, is quite laconic on Ḥarrālī’s relationship with many of these mentors, often supplying us with merely the bare names of his teachers. Thus, to get the best possible approximation of Ḥarrālī’s relationship to these figures and how they may have influenced his corpus we also often have to investigate the teachers of his teachers, and his copupils, and his own students, in ever-widening degrees of association.

This is how, what was originally supposed to be a single biographical chapter, leading into textual analysis of one of Ḥarrālī’s texts, expanded into two biographical chapters, then three, until a runaway process of expansion engendered the excrescence below, the sum of which would inevitably have to be tendered as the final product. Still, the research presented here is worthwhile from several points of view. The dissertation shines a concentrated light on number of obscure corners of intellectual and religious history of the Arabic-speaking Islamic world between roughly the 12th to the 14th centuries. It begins to fill the lacunas in our knowledge of a variety of Islamic environments and phenomena that, for reasons not necessarily connected to Ḥarrālī, deserve to be studied further. Primarily, however, this dissertation serves as an elaborate
biographical and prosopographical prelude to further textual studies of Ḥarrālī’s works, which by all accounts remains a project that is desirable and worthy of effort.
NOTES ON METHODOLOGY

The chapters of this dissertation roughly follow Ḥarrālī’s geographical peregrinations throughout the Maghrib and the Mashriq, providing reasonably in-depth examinations of each of the intellectual and political environments in which he paused.

Most of the chapters that follow can be regarded as vignettes of particular scholarly milieus, but they don’t pretend to be exhaustive monographs of any one environment. Our methodological frame remains centered broadly on the figure of Ḥarrālī and his known associates. But such connections may, at times, be explored at a depth of three or even four degrees of separation, especially when such an effort is necessary to understand a particular vein of thought that influenced Ḥarrālī.

By far the most common sources consulted during the research process are biographical and prosopographical anthologies. Also mined for historically useful information are hagiographical anthologies and monographs. Primary histories and annalistic sources were also considered. As far as secondary literature, there is not a great deal of material that overlapped with the main figures and intellectual currents that I was interested in. When there is overlap I tend to steer clear of re-examining the same material too deeply and confine myself to referencing the relevant work that has already been done.
CHAPTERS OUTLINE

In Chapter One I identify the biographical sources for Ḥarrālī and examine some of the problematic aspects of the biographical literature. An effort is also made to get to the bottom of the unusual nisbah “al-Ḥarrālī”. I also present what little biographical detail we know about Ḥarrālī’s formative years in the Maghrib.

Chapter Two begins by examining the contributions of an earlier generation of Maghribī usūlis like Ibn al-Rammāmah and Salāljī who flourished in the mid-12th century during the transition from Almoravid to Almohad rule and who were deeply influenced by the Iḥyā’ of Ghazālī and the Irshād of al-Juwaynī. The legacy of these figures was keenly felt by later proponents of Ashʿārī kalām like Ibn al-Kattānī and Ibn al-Numuwī who directly instructed Ḥarrālī at the turn of the 13th century.

Chapter Three presents information on the Sufi-traditionist Abū al-Ṣabr al-Fihrī—Ḥarrālī’s first initiator into taṣawwuf. Fihrī along with his own teacher Ibn Ghālib is a crucial piece of the puzzle of understanding how the legacy of the Almerian school of taṣawwuf—the influence of Ibn ‘Arīf, Ibn Barrajān especially—was incorporated into early Maghribī Sufi currents. Chapter Three also deals with Ḥarrālī’s Arabic and hadīth teachers during his early years in the Maghrib, namely, the grammarians Abū Dharr al-Khusbanī and Ibn Kharūf, and the Almohad functionary and traditionist Ibn al-Qaṭṭān.

Chapter Four examines the figures with whom Ḥarrālī associated during his sojourn in Ifrīqiyyā. These include the Dahmānī and Bājī, two widely respected Sufi masters who propagated the teachings of Abū Madyan while also forging their own unique brand of taṣawwuf. Chapter Four also looks at two students of Ḥarrālī: Ibn Abī al-Dunyā and Ibn Bazīzah who would go on
to have a deep impact on the intellectual culture of Ḥafṣid Ifrīqiyā in the second half of the 13th century.

Chapter Five  Ḥarrālī’ other two mentors in the Mashriq also had ties to taṣawwuf. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Fārisī had ties to Persian Sufism while Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qurṭubī was the disciple of the Andalusian-born shaykh Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qurashī. It is also worth noting that towards the end of this period Ḥarrālī seems to come into his own as spiritual master and a small group of disciples begins forming around him.

Chapter Six examines probably the most significant and richly documented phase of Ḥarrālī’s career, his sojourn in Bijāyah. I discuss the political situation and Ḥarrālī’s largely apolitical, renunciative posture. I proffer a comparative analysis between Ḥarrālī’s role as Sufi spiritual master and Abū Madyan’s, who was a longtime resident of Bijāyah. We also also look at the intellectual topography that Ḥarrālī inserted himself into and which he ultimately helped shape, by means of the wide range of subjects he taught and the various orientations of the students he mentored.

Chapter Seven examines an important aspect of Ḥarrālī’s hagiographical image: his karāmāt, the miraculous exploits attributed to him, in particular his ability to peer into the future destinies of individuals (firāsah). We address the question of how Ḥarrālī’s body of karāmāt relates to the wider hagiographical discourse of the time. We also consider what historical implications for Ḥarrālī’s career as a scholar might be teased out of the hagiographical anecdotes. Chapter Seven also considers the dramatic circumstances of Ḥarrālī’s exit from Bijāyah, including Ḥarrālī’s fascinating ecumenical-minded epistle addressed to the archbishop of Tarragona.
Chapter Eight describes Ḥarrālī’s activities and encounters during final part of his career as he journeyed through cities in Egypt, Jerusalem, and Damascus before arriving at Ḥamāh, his final resting place. This chapter examines Ḥarrālī’s consequential encounters in Damascus with Ibn ‘Arabī and the famous jurist ‘Izz al-Dīn Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām.

Chapter Nine lists and briefly describes Ḥarrālī’s works, manuscript collections, studies on Ḥarrālī, and some of the means through which Ḥarrālī’s legacy was transmitted. This chapter also considers Ḥarrālī’s influence on Biqā‘ī who was paradoxically also a virulent critic of Ibn ‘Arabī and Ibn al-Fārid. I also look at Ḥarrālī’s controversial image in the later tradition, including especially by polemical critics like Dhahabī, Ibn Taymīyah, and Sakhāwī.
CHAPTER ONE: A Wealth of Sources, a Dirth of Information

So many aspects of Ḫarrālī’s life remain mired in a stubborn fog of historical uncertainty. The biographical information about him at first sight seems sufficient, but then comes the realization that on many important points, the sources either contradict each other or withhold a key piece of information, such that there is always a question mark almost everywhere one looks, tempting the historian into endless rounds of speculation and never quite offering closure.

Even Ḫarrālī’s name is not a straightforward affair. In this chapter I identify the biographical sources for Ḫarrālī and highlight inconsistencies in the biographical literature pertaining to his name and lineage. An effort is also made to get to the bottom of the unusual nisbah “al-Ḥarrālī”, that is, to identify in as concrete terms as possible the toponymical basis of the nisbah. This matter was only satisfactorily resolved when unusual and old Aragonese sources were consulted. I also present what little biographical detail we know about Ḫarrālī’s formative years in the Maghrib.
Harrālī (d. 638/1241): Name and Biographical Sources

Notices for Ḥarrālī can be found in a number of medieval Arabic biographical and lexicographical sources. He is also mentioned in a few more recent works of this genre. Ḥarrālī’s works are also cited in the major Arabic bibliographical lexicons. In depth biographical information can also be found in the studies on Ḥarrālī and editions of his works by Nyvia in French and Khayyāṭī in Arabic.

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9 Cited in General Introduction.
According to some of the earliest sources the full name of our subject is Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Ibrāhīm al-Tujībī al-Ḥarrālī. Slightly modified or more elongated versions of his lineage are also found. There are also obvious errors that one encounters in Arabic literature with respect to his first name and lineage. The most common laqab associated with Ḥarrālī is that of Fakhr al-dīn which he seems to have earned later in his career in the Mashriq. The laqab is generally used by Mashriqī biographers or in manuscripts of his works copied in the Mashriq. Sometimes the laqab ‘Abd Allāh is also encountered. However, this laqab seems to be an auto-designation, that is, a means by which Ḥarrālī asserts his perfect servanthood (‘ubūdīyah) in a pietistic and spiritual sense.

The common nisbah al-Tujībī refers to Tujīb bint Thawbān ibn Sulaym. The Tujībīs of Andalusia emigrated there during the very early days of the Arab conquest. The first Tujībī was reportedly a certain ‘Umayr ibn al-Muhājir who came with the army of Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr. Over time, the Tujībīs proliferated throughout Muslim Spain, though relatively higher concentrations of them existed in the cities of Saragossa, Qal‘at Ayyūb, and Murcia. A cursory look at the indices of biographical literature specific to the Muslim West reveals that a significant number of

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10 According to Ibn al-Abbār, Ghubrīnī, Bābā, Suyūṭī, Dāwūdī.

11 The following sources add “Aḥmad” between his grandfather al-Ḥasan and his great-grandfather Ibrāhīm: Baghdādī’s Hadīyat al-‘ārifīn, Mintawrī’s Fahrasah, Munāwī’s al-Kawākib al-durrīyah, Ḥarrālī’s Ibnā’ al-khaṭā’ī (ed. Aḥamad Mażīdī), the manuscript collections BNF “Arabe 1398” and Majlis Shūrā MS 27842. The manuscript collections Arabe 1398 and Majlis Shūrā MS 27842 (Sharḥ asmā‘ Allāh al-ḥusnā, fol. 45 b) extend his lineage one additional generation (Muḥammad).


13 Ḥarrālī refers to himself as ‘Abd Allāh on two occasions: once in the letter he addresses to a priest in Tarragona, Spain; another time during a heated oral exchange with the faqīh ‘Izz al-Dīn Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām in Damascus. Both incidents will be discussed in later chapters.

Tujībī families also flourished across the straits in the Maghrib. Because of the nature and scope of biographical anthologies, many of the Tujībīs that history has recorded were prominent scholars or administrators. However, we know very little about Ḥarrālī’s family. One thing we do know, thanks to a letter Ḥarrālī famously addressed to the archbishop of Tarragona—a city that was part of the realm of Aragon under James I the Conqueror—is that Ḥarrālī had extended family members living in Andalusia. On the other hand, I have not been able to locate any concrete information on Ḥarrālī’s father Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Tujībī, nor anyone else in his paternal lineage.

In fact, there remains the possibility that Ḥarrālī’s Arab, Tujībī lineage is fictitious. In an Andalusian society that had been ethnically stratified since the days of the Umayyad Caliphate, there were clear socio-economic incentives for “second class” citizens—like Muslims of Berber origin or new converts of Christian or Jewish backgrounds—to attach themselves to the names of old Arab families. To be clear, the evidence suggesting that this is the case with Ḥarrālī is nowhere close to being definitive. Yet there are two curious instances in his biography that are worth citing in this regard. The first is in Ḥarrālī’s notice in Mundhirī’s *Takmilah* where, for some unknown reason, Ḥarrālī’s full name is spelled out in a manner that elevates and honors his father (italics mine): “…Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī Ibn al-Shaykh Abī al-‘Abbās Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥasan…”  

This leaves us with the impression that Ḥarrālī’s father was someone well known and respected—but, again, I have found no trace of anyone with this name. Alternatively, one might assume that this is some idiosyncratic practice of Mundhirī, a perfunctory honor accorded to the fathers of all his subjects. However, an examination of a broad sample of other notices in the *Takmilah* reveals this not to be the case. 

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The second noteworthy instance is from an anecdote related by Dhahabī, in which a man once approached Ḥarrālī while he was preaching and accused his father of being a neo-Muslim who converted from Judaism (anta kāna abūka yahūdīyan wa-aslam). Ḥarrālī’s heckler does not appear to have been anyone of particular prominence, just a random onlooker who had apparently announced to some peers that he would attempt to get under Ḥarrālī’s skin, since Ḥarrālī was apparently renowned for his unassailable composure in the face of any form of offense directed at his person. After the accusation had been hurled his way, an unruffled Ḥarrālī removed his robe and handed it to his accuser saying: “May God give you good news for testifying that my father died a Muslim (bashsharaka Allāh bia-al-khayr al-ladhī shahidta li-ābī bi-annahu māta musliman)”. It is not clear if Ḥarrālī’s supposed Jewish ancestry was a claim the accuser had simply fabricated or if, on the contrary, it was a more widespread and credible rumor. Given that most of the anecdotal information supplied by Dhahabī on Ḥarrālī comes from Damascene or Ḥamātian sources, this incident probably occurred in one of these two cities in which Ḥarrālī sojourned at the end of his life.

**The nisbah al-Ḥarrālī: Definitions in Arabic Literature**

The nisbah “al-Ḥarrālī” is quite unique. Our subject uses this nisbah to identify himself in his letter to the archbishop of Tarragona. On that occasion, he neglects to identify to himself as “al-Tujībī”, which suggests that the nisbah “al-Ḥarrālī” is what distinguishes him most immediately from others Tujībīs. To be sure, I have not found any other figure in the

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16 Dhahabī, *Ta’rīkh*, vol. 46, p. 337.

17 The same anecdote appears in Bābā’s *Kifāyat al-muḥtāj*, where the clothing item is written in the manuscript as [quraḍiyah]. The editor has an instructive note about the possible meaning of this term which suggests the item may be of Egyptian origin and that it served as some sort of head and neck cover. Bābā, *Kifāyat*, pp. 340-1, 244f. See also Dozy, *Dictionnaire des vêtements*, pp. 380-2.
biographical literature with the name Ḥarrālī. Ibn Abbār is the earliest biographer to indicate that the *nisbah* is derived from a village (*qaryah*) in the environs of Murcia, though he stops short of specifying how the *nisbah* should be vocalized.

Certain early manuscripts of Ḥarrālī’s works are instructive in this regard. In one collection (BNF 1398), we find the name vocalized as al-Ḥirallī. In another collection (Kitābkhāneh Majlis Shūrā 27842) the name is transcribed as al-Ḥirillī, with the letter *alif* completely omitted.

The earliest biographer to spell out the toponym Ḥarāllah and specify the vocalization was Dhahabī. However, since Dhahabī used Ibn Abbār’s *Takmilah* as a source, he may have simply inferred the place name on his own initiative. The vast majority of biographers subsequent to Dhahabī (d. 1348) seem to repeat what the latter says regarding the derivation and vocalization of Ḥarrālī’s *nisbah*.

The place name Ḥarāllah is also cited in lexicographical and geographical works. The earliest of these appears to be Fīrūzābādī’s (d. 817/1414) *al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ*, where Ḥarāllah

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18 The only exceptions that I have found turn out to be copyist or editorial errors. In Makhlūf’s *Shajarat al-nūr* (vol. 1, p. 259, nr. 623) a certain Abū al-Thanā’ al-Ḥarrālī is mentioned as one of the teachers of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn Maṭrūḥ al-Tujībī (d. 1237), a scholar from Valencia. However, after consulting other notices on Ibn Maṭrūḥ (c.f. Ibn Abbār, *Takmilah*, vol. 3, pp. 101-2, nr. 2168) it turns out that the actual figure is Abū al-Thanā’ Ḥammād Ibn Hibat Allāh al-Harrānī, a traditionist whose *nisbah* is derived from the city of Ḥarrān and whom Ibn Maṭrūḥ had met in the Levant (on Abū al-Thanā’ c.f. Dhahabī, *Siyar*, vol. 21, pp. 385-7, nr. 194). This same figure is referred to as Ḥammād al-Ḥarrālī in the notice of another Valencian scholar on the previous page (Makhlūf, *Shajarah*, vol. 1, p. 258, nr. 621). In Ibn al-Qādī’s *Jadhwat al-iqtibās* the notice of the Moroccan traveler Ibn Rushayd (d. 1321) names as one of his teachers in Damascus a certain ‘Izz al-Dīn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Mun’im ibn ‘Alī al-Ḥarrālī (Ibn al-Qādī, *Jadhwah*, p. 290). Given that our Ḥarrālī travels to the Levant in the late 630s/1230s, reportedly in the company of one of his sons, one might be forgiven for entertaining the faint possibility that the figure whom Ibn Rushayd meets in Damascus nearly a century later, whose grandfather’s name was ‘Alī, is indeed one of Ḥarrālī’s descendants. However, the figure whom Ibn al-Qādī is referring to is almost certainly that of ‘Izz al-Dīn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn ‘Abd al-Mun’im al-Ḥarrānī, a traditionist whom Ibn Rushayd mentions in his travelogue *Mil’ al-Ṭbah* (vol. 5, p. 285).

19 See the 1887 edition of the *Takmilah*, vol. 2, nr. 1921. Note that there is no commentary on the *nisbah* nor any reference to the town of Ḥarrālāh in the 1994 and 2011 editions of the *Takmilah*. 
(mushaddadat al-lām) is defined as a balad (not qaryah) in the Maghrib (not in Andalusia).  

Fīrūzābādī is the only authority to my knowledge to state that “Ḥarālī” also refers to a name of a Berber tribe. In a later commentary on the Qāmūs, the Moroccan Ibn Ṭayyīb al-Sharaqī (d. 1761) refutes Fīrūzābādī’s claim that Ḥarrālah is a place in the Maghrib, and reaffirms the mainline view that it is a village in the environs of Murcia. This view is reiterated by Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (d. 1791), another commentator on the Qāmūs, who also adds, however, that the town may have taken its name from a Berber tribe that had settled in the area. In addition to what could be considered the “mainline” vocalization of the toponym and the nisbah (Ḥarālī/Ḥarrālī), Zabīdī also endorses a second vocalization option (Ḥarrālah/Ḥarrālī).

In all of the above cited instances, the village’s sole claim to fame appears to be that the figure Ḥarrālī is named after it. A clear illustration of this tendency can be found in al-Muhāḍarāt, a thematically diverse collection of conversations of the adab genre by the Moroccan man of letters al-Yūsī (d. 1102/1691). The author recalls hearing the following line of poetry from his teachers:

Locales are made known by their men (wa-mā `arrafa al-arjā` illā rijāluhā)

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20 Fīrūzābādī, al-Qāmūs al-muhīṭ, pp. 983-4, [h r l]. The biographical information Fīrūzābādī provides on Ḥarrālī is minimal, describing him merely as “the author of famous works” (dhū al-taṣānīf al-mash`hūrah).

21 According to Khayyāṭī, there exists today a family that goes by the name Ait Ḥarrālī that hails from the town of Banī Mellāl in the Moroccan interior (See Kh. 2011, p. 49). I have not been able to verify this claim.

22 Sharaqī’s statement is cited by Khayyāṭī in Kh. 2011, p. 50, f2. Khayyāṭī cites as his source a manuscript of Ibn Ṭayyīb al-Sharaqī, Ḥādī‘at al-rāmūs, al-Maktabah al-‘Āmmah (Rabat), nr. 344, fol. 229. There is a published edition of this work (Morocco, 1983) which I have consulted but was unable to locate the reference to Ḥarrālah cited by Khayyāṭī.

23 al-Zabīdī, Tāj al-‘arūs min jawāhir al-Qāmūs, vol. 28, pp. 293-4, [h r l]. Zabīdī provides a more expanded biographical summary for Ḥarrālī (compared to the information found in Sharaqī and Fīrūzābādī). Zabīdī’s source seems to be Munāwī’s (d. 1621) notice of Ḥarrālī in al-Kawākib al-durrīyah.
for otherwise no land has merit over another (wa-illā fa-lā faḍlun li-turbin ‘alā turbi)

In his commentary on this verse, Yūsī says:

The meaning is that regions of the earth—and so also its cities and villages—are made known and famous by the people who are named after them, such as Abū ‘Uthmān al-Maghribī, Ibn ‘Amir al-Shāmī, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, and Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ḥarrālī.24

The question is then: are there any instances of the toponym Ḥarāllah being cited, either prior to the life of Ḥarrālī, or in a context that is independent of Ḥarrālī the scholarly figure?

Unlike in later lexicons like Fīrūzābādi’s Qāmūs, the place name Ḥarāllah does not feature, for example, in earlier ones like al-Jawhari’s25 (d. ca. 400/1010) al-Ṣiḥāḥ and Sāghānī’s (d. 650/1252) Takmilah. In his Nuzhat al-mushtāq, the geographer al-Idrīsī (d. 1166) also fails to mention any similar-sounding toponyms in the section describing the region of Murcia.26 Nor is Ḥarāllah mentioned in Ḥāzim al-Qarṭāŷānī’s (d. 1285) Maqṣūrah, a poem which includes extensive descriptions of the Murcian countryside.27

To my knowledge, the only original instance in Arabic literature of Ḥarāllah the place name being mentioned without reference to Ḥarrālī the scholar is in al-Mughrib fī ḥulā al-Maghrib by Ibn Sa‘īd (d. 1286) who cites an apparently lost work titled Kitāb al-ash ‘hur al-muhillah fī ḥulā

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26 Idrīsī, Nuzhat, pp. 556-62.

27 Of Murcian origin, al-Qarṭāŷānī emigrated and settled in Tunis around the mid-thirteenth century. He composed his Qaṣīdah maqṣūrah in a bid to persuade the Ḥafṣid ruler al-Mustanṣir bi-Llāh to help Spanish Muslims stanch the Christian advance. The poem has been analyzed for its geographic and toponymic import by Pocklington in his article La descripción de la vega de Murcia en la Qaṣīda Maqṣūra de Házim al-Qarṭāŷānī. The poem has also been commented upon by Gharnāṭī (d. 760/1359) in his Raf’ al-ḥujub al-mastūrah ‘an maḥāsin al-Maṣṣūra, published [Rabat], 1997, in 4 vols. No mention of Ḥarāllah was found in the latter work either.

The *nisbah* al-Ḥarrālī: Evidence from Aragonese and Castilian Sources

In an attempt to cross-reference the evidence from primary Arabic literature, I also tried using cartographic sources to locate some Spanish locale in the vicinity of Murcia that bore some orthographic resemblance to the Arabic root [*ḥ r l*]. At first, this method simply involved the rather crude and haphazard use of “Google Maps” and which ultimately it yielded no real results. For example, one possibility that was considered was the town of Orihuela, approximately ten miles North-East of Murcia. As it turns out, this city existed since pre-Islamic times when it was the capital of the Visigothic province of Aurariola. And although the town of Ūriūlah was indeed inhabited during the Islamic era, the figures who hailed from there carried the *nisbah* al-Ūriūlī.

Another possibility seemed to be the town of El Raal, located approximately six miles East-North-East of Murcia. Although the name of the town appears to be missing the element [*ḥ*], I speculated that, in the process of changing from Muslim to Christian hands in the 13th century, the place name currently inscribed as El Raal may have originally been closer to something like “Ḥarrāl” in Arabic. The mistake may have occurred if a Christian scribe—perhaps having to rely solely on oral reports rather than on a written and orthographically clear record—mistook the

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28 Ibn Saʿīd, *Mughrib*, vol. 2, p. 292. In the modern edition of the *Mughrib*, the toponym is written as (الحرلة), thus al-Ḥarallah, or following the rhyme al-Ḥarillah. Even closer to the rhyme would be the vocalization al-Ḥurillah.

29 Another instance of the toponym being mentioned is in *Taqwīm al-wulūd* by the Ḥamātian historian, geographer and politician Abū al-Fidāʾ (d. 1331). The latter, however, references Ibn Saʿīd as his source and does not provide any additional information, except for asserting with no justification that the toponym should be vocalized as al-Ḥirillah. Abū al-Fidāʾ, *Taqwīm al-wulūd*, p. 179. Ibn Saʿīd’s information is also repeated in the modern work of Ḥatāmilah, *Mawsūʿat al-diyār al-Andalusīyah*, vol. 1, p. 424.
phonological combination of ḥā’ mafiūḥah and rā’ mushaddadah (ḥarr-) for the combination of the alif-lām article and the letter rāʾ under euphonic tashdīd (ar-r-). As it turns out, however, historians of the region have shown that the town of El Raal derives its name from the term raḥal, which means broadly “farm”, “farmhouse”, or “ranch.”

But it was thanks to the work of these contemporary scholars studying Murcia that I came across an unexpected type of source that, ultimately, seemed to confirm the existence of the town of Ḥarrālī’s putative origin. The municipal archives of Murcia have preserved a precious document in Castilian Spanish which records how the fertile lands surrounding the Murcia, once tended to by Muslim farmers, were redistributed to newly-arrived Christian settlers during the second half of the thirteenth century. A cadaster of sorts, the document is titled Libro del Repartimiento de las tierras hecho a los pobladores de Murcia. Because the work relied heavily on old Arab records, historians of the region have been able to gain insights into the

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30 The term raḥal has given rise to a number of Spanish derivatives, for example: rafal, raffal, raual, arrahal, real, reyal, and in this case raal. In Muslim Spain, or at least in the Murcia region, the term raḥal designated a distinct class of rural real estate, a domain possessed usually by a single, aristocratic individual. The socio-juridical status of a raḥal differed from that of the qaryah (pl. qurā/ alquerías) which designated a village property, that is, small rural agglomerations in which a variable number of families exploited the land. Each qaryah would typically have its own small mosque. Menjot, Murcie Castillane, vol. 1, pp. 62-74.

31 Pocklington, Estudios Toponímicos, pp. 225-6. Even if in the case of El Raal the evidence conclusively shows that it derives from raḥal, I do wonder if there are other cases of Arabic toponyms which begin with ḥā’, hā’, or a hamzah mafiūḥah—followed by a mushaddad consonant—being mistakenly rendered into Spanish as beginning with al- or el-.

32 On the complex history of Murcia’s transition from Muslim to Christian rule in the 13th century see Menjot, Murcie Castillane, vol. 1, 117-39. The attendant demographic shifts are also analyzed in vol. 1, pp. 141-85.

region’s agrarian socio-economic structures during the Muslim era. Crucially for our purposes here, the document has also enabled a remarkably detailed reconstruction of the toponymical features of the Murcian countryside. And one of the hamlets in the environs of Murcia is that of Alharilla.

In the original 13th century Repartimento, the toponym Alharilla is mentioned throughout and in various orthographic forms (Alharilla, Alffarella, Alfarella, Alfariella, Alhariella). In his study of the toponymy of the Murcia region, Pocklington situates the town of Alharilla just outside of the walled perimeter of medieval Mursîyah. Flowing between the two is the Segura river: Alharilla lies on the river’s southern bank, while a section of the Mursîyah’s walls abut the northern riverbank. In addition, among the several thousand names recorded by the Christian scribe(s) in the Repartimento, there are two discrete mentions of the Muslim nisbah “Alharelli”. Thus, we finally have what is possibly the most solid evidence for the existence of a place transcribed as Alharilla as well as of a local family whose nisbah appears to take after the town.

The toponym Alharilla is not believed to be related to the term raḥal. Authorities on the history of the region argue, rather, that Alharilla is a distant derivative of the root [ḥ ṭ r]. Specifically, the toponym is related to the noun ḥārah (pl. ḥārāt) meaning a thickly settled

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34 Menjot, Murcie Castillane, vol. 1, pp. 31-82.

35 Discussions of “Alharilla” can be found in Pocklington, Estudios Toponimicos, pp. 181-2 (see also map on p. 107); Fontes, Repartimento de la Huerta y Campo de Murcia en el siglo XIII, pp. 126-7. Steiger, Toponimia, p. 17. See also the map in Menjot, Murcie Castillane, vol. 1, p. 37.

36 In one instance, it is stated that the land once owned by a certain Albocaçim (sic) Alharelli was transferred to one Antonio de la Pinasca. In a second instance, the land that once belonged to a certain Mahomad Aben Caçim Alharelli is mentioned as part of a consolidation scheme involving multiple plots. In both instances, the acreage involved is modest, which suggests that the two figures were in all likelihood simple farmers. Torres Fontes, Libro, vol. 2, pp. 76v, 87r.
“quarter”, “suburb”, or “borough” of a city; the word can also signify a narrow “lane”, “alley”, or “side street”. A synonym sometimes given is rabāḍ (pl. arbāḍ). To ḥārah is added the diminutive -āllah, a form that appears to be specific to Andalusian Arabic, and that gives us ḥarāllah (pl. ḥarāllāt). According to Pocklington, the orthographic discrepancies of this toponym encountered in various sources—al-Ḥarilla in the Repartimiento, al-Ḥarallah in Ibn Sa‘īd—suggests that the locale was actually pronounced /al-Ḥarélla/, a kind of phonetic midway point between the two inscriptions.

The town does not appear to have existed in earlier periods of Muslim rule. Assuming that Ḥarrālī’s father was born in al-Ḥarāllah, one might speculate that the locale existed since at least the 12th century. The town seems to have continued to exist in the following centuries. For instance, Cascales (d. 1642) mentions “Alharilla” in his Discursos históricos de Murcia. But the hamlet decidedly remained too minor a landmark to be depicted by Renaissance and early-modern cartographers of the greater Murcia region. Today, of course, the boundaries defined by the walls of the medieval Muslim city of Mursīyah have been heavily blurred by the sprawl of the modern city. The only extant toponymical vestige of Alharilla appears to be a small side-

37 The term rabāḍ can also denote “a place where animals lie down to rest”.
38 The only source that I have found that cites this form is the early orientalist lexicon of Schiaparelli, Vocabulista in arabico (1871), p. 511. There, the Latin term “Parochia”, that is “parish” in the broader sense of an urban area, is translated into Arabic as ḥārah (pl. ḥārāt), rabāḍ (pl. arbāḍ), and harrālah (pl. ḥarrālāt).
40 See the map of the Murcia region based on 9th century sources in Pocklington, Estudios Toponimicos, p. 115 (Reconstruccion de la vega de Murcia hacia el siglo IX).
41 Cascales, Discursos históricos, p. 45.
street in greater Murcia named Calle Alarilla, whose location on the southern bank of the Segura does seem to roughly match the estimated location of the medieval hamlet.

The nisbah al-Ḥarrālī: Irregularities in the Bibliographical Literature

The nisbah “al-Ḥarrālī” (الحرالي) gets mistakenly transmuted into “al-Ḥarrānī” (الحراني) at the hands of several biographers from the Mashriq. The reference is to the town of Ḥarrān that was destroyed by the Mongols in 1271 and whose ruins lie in South-East modern-day Turkey, on the border with Syria. Many notable figures in the medieval period carried the nisbah Ḥarrānī, including Ibn Taymīyah (d. 1328). Interestingly, the hazard presented by the similarity between Ḥarrānī and Ḥarrālī is flagged very early on by Ibn al-ʿImādīyah (d. 1210-1275) in a biographical lexicon dealing with the vocalization of names and especially phonetic and orthographic similarities between names.

Other nisbahs are attached to our subject. For example, the nisbah “al-Marrākushī”, which appears to be based on the claim, originally made by Ibn Abbār, that Ḥarrālī was born and lived in the Almohad capital. Other nisbahs that one encounters include “al-Mursī”45, “al-Andalūsī”46, and...

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43 Starting with Dhahabī who uses [Ḥarrānī] in his Mīzān al-iʿtīdāl but uses Ḥarrālī in his Taʿrīkh al-Islām, Siyar Aʿlām al-Nubalāʾ, and al-ʿIbar. However, because in his Taʿrīkh Dhahabī identifies the place name Ḥarrālah (no doubt because of his reliance on Ibn Abbār’s Taḵmilah) it is quite possible that the misspelling (in the Mīzān or elsewhere) is a copyist error. Besides Dhahabī, other biographers who use the misspelling [Ḥarrānī] include ‘Asqalānī in his Lisān al-mīzān, Ibn ʿImād in his Shadharat al-dhahab, and Ibn Taghribirdī in his al-Nujūm al-zāhirah. Since many of these biographers rely on either Dhahabī or Ibn Abbār, it is entirely possible that their misspelling too is due to copyist error.

44 Ibn al-ʿImādīyah, Dhayl Taḵmilat al-Ikmāl, vol. 1, p. 226. Ibn al-ʿImādīyah does not mention the place name “Ḥarrālah”. The Dhayl is an addendum to Ibn Nuqṭah’s (d. 1231) Taḵmilat al-Ikmāl, itself an addendum to Ibn Mākūlā’s (1030-1082) al-Ikmāl fī raʃīd al-irtiyāb ‘an al-muʿtaṣib wa-al-mukhtalīf min al-asmāʾ wa-al-kunā wa-al-ansāb. This field of study—known sometimes as al-muʿtaṣib wa-al-mukhtalīf—is an important ancillary to the science of ḥadīth.


46 Dhahabī (Siyyar, and Taʿrīkh).
and “al-Maghribi”\(^{47}\). For example, the biographer Dhahabī, who composes six discrete notices for Ḥarrālī in various works, offers a variety of \textit{nisbah} combinations on each occasion. One of the most absurd mix-ups in more recent biographical literature is surely that which is found in Nabhānī’s (d. 1932) \textit{Jāmi’ karāmāt al-awliyā’}, where on the very same page we find an entry for [‘Alī ibn Aḥmad al-Tujībī al-Andalusī] and another entry for [Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad al-Ḥarrānī al-Andalusī].

The most mysterious irregularity in the biographical literature on Ḥarrālī is his notice in Mundhirī’s (d. 1258) \textit{al-Takmilah li-wafayāt al-naqalah}. Going by the date of death of the author, this is the earliest biographical entry for Ḥarrālī, superseding even that of Ibn Abbār. Mundhirī is the only biographer who claims to have received his information directly from Ḥarrālī during an encounter that probably occurred in Cairo or Damascus towards the end of Ḥarrālī’s life. The main problem with the notice in the \textit{Takmilah} is that, although the lineage given accords with that found in other sources, the \textit{nisbah} “al-Ḥarrālī” is completely omitted.\(^{48}\) Instead two new \textit{nisbahs} are appended which appear in no other early source: “al-Kindī” and “al-Burshānī”.\(^{49}\) A few later sources do reference Mundhirī biographical entry, like Ibn Nāṣir al-Dīn

\(^{47}\) Dhahabī (\textit{Mīzān}).

\(^{48}\) The full name given in the notice is: al-shaykh al-fāḍil Fakhr al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī Ibn al-Shaykh Abī al-‘Abbās Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Ahmad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad al-Kindī al-Tujībī al-Marrākushī al-Burshānī. Mundhirī’s mysterious emphasis of the name of the father has been discussed in a footnote above.

\(^{49}\) Mundhirī alleges that he heard the toponym vocalized as “Burshānī” from the mouth of Ḥarrālī. Mundhirī goes on to state that, according to the traditionist Abū al-Ṭāhir al-Silafī, the \textit{nisbah} should be vocalized as “Barshānī” in reference to “Barshānah”, a \textit{qaryah} near Seville. This information accords with what Yāqūt gives in his \textit{Mu’jam al-buldān}. The Spanish locale that these authors are invoking is presumably the small town of Purchena (پرشناعة), which, however, is much closer to Almeria (55km) and Murcia (120km) than it is to Seville (320km). An orthographically similar toponym in Arabic is Buryānā/Burria (بَرْرِيَانُ), a coastal town 20km north of Valencia that was conquered by James I of Aragon in 1233. Yāqūt, \textit{Mu’jam al-buldān}, vol. 1, p. 384.
(d. 1438) in his Tawdīḥ al-Mushtabah (a commentary on Dhahabī’s al-Mushtabah fī ḍabṭ asmā’ al-ruwāh).⁵⁰ Mundhirī is also cited in Ḥarrālī’s notice in Udfuwī’s (d. 748/1347) al-Badr al-Sāfir.⁵¹

The biographical information in Mundhirī’s notice—such as the details of peregrinations in the Maghrib and the Mashriq—either accord directly with what we find in other sources or, at the very least, are plausible from a chronological and geographical standpoint. Thus, there can be little doubt that the notice in Mundhirī’s Takmilah corresponds with our subject al-Ḥarrālī, even if no one up until this point has made the connection, including the modern editor of the Takmilah. However, the question of why our subject is given the nisbahs “al-Burshānī” and “al-Kindī” in this work—and why the nisbah “al-Ḥarrālī” is omitted—is one for which I don’t have a clear answer at the present time.

Ḥarrālī’s Early Years in the Far Maghrib

The early part of Ḥarrālī’s life is shrouded in a degree of mystery. The biographical information is sparse, vague, and sometimes sources contradict each other. Ibn Abbār’s Takmilah, from which the majority of later biographers take their cue, states that Ḥarrālī was born in Marrakesh. For his part, Mundhirī names the coastal city of Sabtah (Ceuta) as Ḥarrālī’s place of birth. Mundhirī is also the only source to specify a date of birth: Dhū al-Ḥijjah 582

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⁵⁰ Ibn Nāṣir al-Dīn actually refers to Mundhirī’s notice of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Burshānī (i.e. Ḥarrālī), citing him as an example of a figure who hails from the locale of Purchena and repeating some of the biographical details found in Mundhirī’s Takmilah. The other example given by Ibn Nāṣir al-Dīn of someone with family origins in Purchena is the figure of Ibn Ṭufayl, the well-known philosopher. Ibn Nāṣir al-Dīn, Tawdīḥ, vol. pp. 457-8, “al-Barshānī”. Dhahabī, al-Mushtabah, vol. 1, p. 66, 1f. See also the biographical entry for Ibn Ṭufayl “al-Barshānī” in Udfuwī, Badr, vol. 2, pp. 8556, nr. 434.

⁵¹ While Udfuwī does not reproduce all the biographical details in Mundhirī’s Takmilah, he does cite a four-line poem which does not appear in the Takmilah (Mundhirī claims he wrote down some of Ḥarrālī’s poetry, but none of it is reproduced in the edition of the Takmilah). Udfuwī also gives a more precise birthdate than the Takmilah’s Dhū al-Ḥijjah 582, indicating that Ḥarrālī was born on the 10th of that same month and year. Udfuwī, Badr, vol. 1, p. 544, nr. 270.
(Feb/Mar 1187), information which he claims he elicited directly from Ḥarrālī (*saʿaltuhu ‘an mawlidīhi fa-qāl*...). During his time in the Maghrib, we can be reasonably certain that Ḥarrālī visited, if not lived in, the cities of Marrakesh, Sabtah, and Fez. Interestingly, the latter city is not explicitly mentioned in any source, but Ḥarrālī’s presence there can be inferred from the fact that all of his teachers taught in this major intellectual center at some point in time—some are known to have taught there exclusively.

There are suggestions in the biographical literature to the effect that Ḥarrālī spent time in Andalusia. However, this possibility cannot be definitively verified on the basis of the current evidence. Some of Ḥarrālī’s teachers are indeed known to have taught in Andalusian cities. But none were known for being confined to Andalusia over the course of their careers. In fact, most of Ḥarrālī’s teachers appear to have been actively teaching in Fez at some point in the window between 1190 and 1210, a period that coincides with the busiest years of Ḥarrālī’s formative education. In other words, Ḥarrālī’s biographical narrative does not require a sojourn in Spain for it to be coherent. If posed in binary, yes-or-no terms, the question of whether Ḥarrālī ever stepped foot in Spain is one regarding which we can afford to be pragmatic. For unless the answer to the question also supplied us with additional information, such as for instance the identity of some heretofore unknown Andalusian teacher of his, it would not substantially alter our understanding of Ḥarrālī’s biography.

Among those who mention this are Ibn Abbār, Maqqārī, and Zabīdī.

Khayyāṭī, who wrote a monograph in Arabic on Ḥarrālī (2011) and edited some of his works (1997), argues adamantly that Ḥarrālī did not travel to Andalusia for his education. In my view, none of Khayyāṭī’s arguments amount to definitive proof of such a contention. In this instance, Khayyāṭī’s seems to be driven by nationalistic motives. The fear seems to be that if Ḥarrālī was partly educated in Muslim Spain this would undercut the image of Ḥarrālī as a brilliant product of the Far Maghrib, i.e. of “Morocco” conceived in anachronistic, modern geopolitical terms. This might also explain why Khayyāṭī
Nothing is known for certain about Ḥarrālī’s socio-economic background. Neither his father nor anyone else in his paternal lineage features in the biographical literature. This suggests Ḥarrālī did not come from a long line of distinguished religious scholars. He may yet have hailed from a wealthy merchant family for instance: the little anecdotal evidence we have of Ḥarrālī’s early life suggest that Ḥarrālī was a man of means. A strong indicator is Ḥarrālī’s early emigration from the Maghrib early and his extensive and circuitous travels thereafter—travel in the pre-modern period was usually an expensive affair. Moreover, the biographer Ibn Ṭawwāḥ tells us that, in his early years in the Maghrib, Ḥarrālī was known for wearing fine clothes (thiyāb al-lānis).54

According to this same biographer, Ḥarrālī in his youth was regarded as a sophisticate (min ẓūrafā’ ʿaṣrīh) and a belletrist (udabāʾ ahl maṣrīh). His presence was prized in the most cultured gatherings (kāna ḥāluh yuṭraz bi-hi anfās al-majālis). Ibn Ṭawwāḥ also alleges that Ḥarrālī worked as a kātib for the Almohad Caliph al-Manṣūr. However, this last claim is problematic for a couple reasons. First, the term kātib is still poorly understood in the context of the regimes of the Muslim West. One reasons for this is the lack of archival evidence.56 Another somewhat minimizes the importance of the mentor figures Ḥarrālī encounters in Ifrīqiyya, Egypt, and the Hijāz. See Kh. 2011, pp. 54, 75.

54 The editor of notes that the expression thiyāb al-lānis is a darb of (or ḍuriba min) the expression nafīs al-thiyāb, i.e. fine, expensive clothes.

55 In Lisān al-ʿarab defines the term al-ẓarf as pertaining to the description of younger subjects (fatā) and not older ones (shaykh, sayyid).

56 The question of what kind of “chancelleries” these regimes possessed is still an open one. Unlike in medieval Europe, where we can speak of a specialized and hierarchically structured institution in the service of a sovereign or a pope, the Muslim West lacks a substantial body of archival evidence that would point to the existence a corps of secretaries preforming well-defined functions. On the function of the kuttāb in the Muslim West, including during the Tāʾifah, Almoravid, and Almohad periods, see Hopkins, Medieval, pp. 11-14.
is that the administrative function denoted the term appears to have changed substantially over the course of various political periods. In the early Almohad era, the *kuttāb al-inshā’* appear to have been well integrated into the state apparatus, working closely with the caliph as draftsmen of official letters. Towards the end of the 12th century, the *kitābah* function takes on an increasingly religious, legis character—the significance of the titles *qāḍī* and *kātib* in Almohad bureaucracy may have become increasingly interchangeable.57 One of the main sources on the political and administrative history of Almohads is ‘Abd al-Wāḥid al-Marrākushī’s chronicle *al-Mu’jīb fī talkhīṣ akhbār al-Maghrib*. Written circa 621/1224, *al-Mu’jīb* includes a list of the *kātibs* who worked under every Almohad caliph up until that point. In the event, Ḥarrālī does not feature among the *kuttāb* who served under Abū Yūsuf Ya‘qūb al-Manṣūr (r. 580-595/1184-1199) nor under any other Almohad caliph.58

Additionally, the idea that Ḥarrālī served specifically under al-Manṣūr is one that does not square chronologically with Ḥarrālī’s birthdate of 582/1187 given by Mundhirī. Ya‘qūb al-Manṣūr steps down from power in 595/1199 and dies later that year. Ḥarrālī would have been at most twelve years old, which seems too young to be in the employ of the royal chancellery. But it’s also worth noting that, among Ḥarrālī’s teachers, the one with the earliest death date is Ibn al-Kattānī (d. 596/1200). The Maghrib’s foremost authority on theology at the time, this illustrious figure reportedly taught *uṣūl* to Ḥarrālī.59 Could Ḥarrālī have been so brilliant at the

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57 See Al-‘Allaoui’s article *La Chancellerie Almohade*.


59 The two earliest sources to name Ibn al-Kattānī as one of Ḥarrālī’s teachers are the Tunisian Ibn Ğawāh (d. 1318) and Ibn Rushayd (d. 1321). Both sources should be considered reliable as they relied upon informants who had studied directly under Ḥarrālī.
tender age of twelve that he was studying some of the most advanced academic subjects on offer in the Maghrib while also serving at the pleasure of an Almohad caliph ruling over a sprawling empire? Perhaps the former prospect is somewhat more conceivable than the latter. Then again, it is also possible that the Mundhirī-given birthdate is simply inaccurate and that Ḥarrālī was actually born a decade or two earlier.60

Judging by the claims of his biographers and the quality of his corpus, there can be little doubt that Ḥarrālī excelled as a student during his formative years. Ḥarrālī’s biographers do indicate that he was something of a prodigy who had early on “acquired such knowledge that he surpassed his peers” (ḥaṣṣala min al-‘īlm mā sabqa bi-hi abnāʾ waqtiḥ). Ḥarrālī was already advanced enough academically during his Maghrib years that he apparently began tutoring students of his own.61 Nor can we rule out the possibility that Ḥarrālī served in some capacity in the Almohad administration, though perhaps it was during the reign of, not al-Manṣūr, but rather his successor al-Nāṣir (r. 595-610/1199-1213).

On balance, however, I am not inclined to believe that Ḥarrālī rose to great prominence during this phase of his life. In my estimation, Ḥarrālī simply emigrated from the Maghrib too early on in his career to have left a significant mark. Ḥarrālī probably leaves around the year 1210, close to the age of twenty, going by the Mundhirī birthdate. This early departure would

60 The birth date given by Mundhirī is consistent enough with other data that it should be considered provisional, but not definitive. There is no clear-cut reason why we should privilege the information found in Mundhirī’s Takmilah over that found in Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s Sabk. Mundhirī may have personally met Ḥarrālī, but Ibn Ṭawwāḥ was also well informed through Ḥarrālī’s students and his Sabk offers significantly more detailed and anecdotal portrait of Ḥarrālī than does Mundhirī’s Takmilah. In light of the Sabk’s assertion that Ḥarrālī was in the employ of Sultan al-Manṣūr and that he studied under Ibn al-Kattānī, the supposed birthdate of 582/1187 appears somewhat late. One might reasonably speculate that, in the Takmilah, a scribal or editorial error gives us the year 582 (۲۸٥) when originally it was 562 (۲۶٥).

61 The one student that Ḥarrālī reportedly tutored in the Maghrib was Muḥammad Ibn ʿĀbid al-Anṣārī, as will be discussed in Ch. Two.
also explain the (quite counterintuitive) fact that Ḥarrālī barely features in the biographical record of the Far Maghrib. Ḥarrālī is conspicuously absent, for example, from al-Dhayl wa-al-takmilah, one of the main biographical lexicons covering the Almohad era. Its author, Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik al-Marrākushī’s (d. 1303), was very well informed of Almohad politics and institutional history and had an encyclopedic knowledge of the men of letters who flourished in the very same urban milieus where Ḥarrālī presumably spent his formative years.

It is really further east—including especially in the city of Bijāyah in the Eastern Maghrib—that Ḥarrālī made a name for himself. Upon leaving the Far Maghrib, Ḥarrālī spent time in Ifrīqiya, Egypt, and the Hijāz. Then he doubled back West but stopped short of a full return to his homeland, settling instead in Bijāyah in Eastern Algeria for a period approximately from 1230 to 1235. After that, Ḥarrālī travelled once again to the East and spent the remaining years of his life in Egypt and the Levant. Little wonder then that the most detailed accounts of his life are provided by biographers based further to the East, most notably Ghubrīnī, a Bijāyah native, and Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, a Tūnis native.62 These biographers base their accounts primarily on information supplied by former students who had personally studied under Ḥarrālī in Bijāyah. These students most likely heard about their teacher’s life from his own lips.

The other important biographer of Ḥarrālī is Ibn Abbār (d. 1260) who is of Andalusian origin and spent his later career in the Western and especially the Eastern Maghrib. But the rather meagre information on Ḥarrālī supplied in his Takmilah also seems to have been gleaned

62 Even Dhahabī (d. 1349) provides some original information on the basis of informants who associated with Ḥarrālī during his brief sojourn in Damascus and then, finally, in Ḥamāt. Dhahabī seems to be the cutoff point in terms of original biographical information on Ḥarrālī. Almost all subsequent biographers rely either on Ghubrīnī and/or Dhahabī.
from former pupils of Ḥarrālī in Bijāyah.\textsuperscript{63} This is all to say that, despite the relative richness of the biographical information on Ḥarrālī overall, none of it appears to have been sourced from informants who directly knew Ḥarrālī during his early years in the Far Western Maghrib. The little information that we have about this early phase of Ḥarrālī’s life appears to have originated from whatever details Ḥarrālī himself may have revealed to his Bijāyan students, which were later transmitted to the biographers Ghubrīnī, Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, and Ibn Abbār.

From the point of view of intellectual history, the most helpful information that these three biographers provide on Ḥarrālī’s early years in the Maghrib is the names of his Maghribī teachers. These are the theologians Ibn al-Kattānī and Ibn al-Numuwī, the Sufi traditionist Abū al-Ṣabr al-Fihrī of Sabtah, the grammarians Abū Dharr al-Khushanī and Ibn Kharūf, and the Almohad functionary and traditionist Ibn al-Qaṭṭān. Beyond citing their names, however, Ḥarrālī’s biographers do not tell us what texts he studied under them nor even, in some cases, when and where this study took place. This circumspection also applies to the biographers’ description of Ḥarrālī’s later teachers in the Mashriq.

But what’s also significant is that, as far as Ḥarrālī’s Maghribī teachers are concerned, none has a biographical notice in which Ḥarrālī is named as a student. In other words, the most informed biographers of Ḥarrālī—i.e. the Ifrīqiyyans Ghubrīnī and Ibn Ṭawwāḥ—themselves knew little about the Maghribī teachers whose names they cite in passing. At the same time, the primary biographers of these Maghribī teachers—authorities like Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik al-Murrakushī—for their part seem to have known little or nothing about Ḥarrālī. This again

\textsuperscript{63} Although Ibn Abbār began work on the \textit{Takmilah} in 630 or even earlier, it is believed that he kept adding to it over the years and did not complete the final version until towards the end of his life after he had moved to Ifrīqiyyā. The \textit{Takmilah}’s rather laconic notice of Ḥarrālī was almost certainly a later addition, since Ibn Abbār refers to Ḥarrālī’s death in Ḥamāh in 637.
suggests that Ḥarrālī emigrated early and was not widely known during his early years in the Maghrib.
CHAPTER TWO: The *kalām* masters of Fez

Ḥarrālī’s biographers unanimously point to his preoccupation with theoretical disciplines, which they variously refer to as ‘ulūm al-nazar or ‘ulūm al-dirāyah, and which include *usūl al-fiqh* and *usūl al-dīn*. When it comes to Hārālī’s formative years, however, all we have to go by are the bare names of his Maghribī mentors. But digging into the biographies of these individuals reveals that they belong to identifiable currents of thought. The figure of Ibn al-Kattānī, for example, was probably the leading authority of Ash’arī theology in his time in the far Maghrib. And even though, like many of the figures in Ḥarrālī’s orbit, he did not leave behind a substantial corpus, the biographical literature connects him to important *ūṣūlī* reform currents that were inspired by the teachings of Ghazālī and Juwaynī, and that were active in the Maghrib as early as the Almoravid period.

This *usūl al-dīn* movement in the Maghirb can actually be linked with an even earlier *usūl* al-*fiqh* movement which, in Muslim Spain, had been gathering momentum since the Tāʾifah period. In the ethnically stratified post-Umayyad social environment, where Arab elites imposed a parochial and politically self-serving brand of Mālikism, a new generation *ḥadīth* specialists and Shafiʿī-inspired jurists, many of *muwallad* backgrounds, began advocating among other things for the implementation of *usūl* methodology in the religious sciences. The rise of the *usūl* movement in the Muslim West has already been analyzed by Cornell in his *Realm of the Saint*. To avoid covering too much of the same ground, this chapter will focus on the *usūlī* figures who flourished south of the straits—a subject which Cornell’s research also covers, though there are certain lacunas with respect to figures like Ibn al-Rammāmah, al-Salāljī, and Ibn al-Kattānī.
Hailing from the Ifrīqiyan town of Tawzar is the deeply influential and maverick figure of Abū al-Faḍl Ibn al-Naḥwī. Instead of migrating to the Mashriq, Ibn al-Naḥwī elected for unknown reasons to spend the better part of his career in the Almoravid West. Against the prevailing Mālikī religious culture, Ibn al-Naḥwī tried to promote an uṣūl-based approach to Islamic law while championing the teachings of Ghazālī as articulated in the Iḥyā’.


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65 Abū al-Qāsim ‘Abd al-Jalīl ibn Abī Bakr al-Raba’ī al-Qarawī al-Dībājī “Ibn al-Ṣābūnī”. This little-known figure studied in Qayrawān with disciples of the major Ash’arite theologian Abū Bakr al-Baqillānī (d. 403/1013). He is the author of a commentary on Baqillānī’s Kitāb al-Tamhīd titled al-Tasdīd fī sharḥ al-Tamhīd, which represents one of the oldest texts of Maghribi Ash’arism. See the informative article by Ansari and Thiele “Discussing al-Baqillānī’s Theology in the Maghrib: ‘Abd al-Jalīl b. Abī Bakr al-Dībājī al-Raba’ī’s al-Tasdīd fī sharḥ al-Tamhīd”. Additional secondary references are listed on p. 132 of the article.

66 Ibn al-Naḥwī transmitted Lakhmī’s widely-studied al-Tabṣira’h, a lengthy commentary on the Mudawwanah. According to a widely-circulated anecdote, Lakhmī asked Ibn al-Naḥwī why he wanted to study with him. When Ibn al-Naḥwī said “I came to you that I may transmit from you Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and that I might make a copy of your Tabṣira’h”, Lakhmī said: “So, you want to carry me off in the palm of your hand? (turīd an tahmilnī fī kaffik)”. Lakhmī considered the Tabṣira’h to be his magnum opus in which he had deposited the sum total of his knowledge.

67 Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn ‘Umar al-Māzarī, a renowned Mālikī legist and traditionist accorded the surname “al-Imām”. His nisbah derives from the Sicilian town of Mazzara. Two of the works Māzarī was known for are his Sharḥ ‘alā Talqīn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb [al-Tha’labī] (d. 422/1031) which deals with Mālikī furū’; and his Kitāb ʿĪdāh al-maḥṣūl min Burhān al-uṣūl, a commentary on al-
His career in the Far Maghrib began in the great mosque of the city of Sijilmāssah, an important center of Saharan caravan routes. At a time when most legists in the Maghrib relied on an accreted body of Mālikī juridical precedent, Ibn al-Naḥwī vigorously opposed what he deemed blind emulation (taqlīd). He advocated for a return to the root texts of the Islamic tradition, texts which he believed should be approached using independent reasoning (naẓar) and personal opining (ijtihād). Ibn al-Naḥwī’s main source of inspiration was the teachings of al-Ghazālī, particularly as articulated in the Iḥyā’—a work which he held in such high esteem that he reportedly copied it in thirty equal sections and, like the Qur’ān, would read one section every night during the month of Ramadan. Ibn al-Naḥwī also put particular emphasis on Ghazālī’s Qur’ānically derived ideal of “enjoining the good and forbidding evil” (al-amr bi-al-maʿrūf wa-al-nahy ‘an al-munkar).

Ultimately, he was ejected from Sijilmāssah by the city’s Almoravid governor on the grounds that he was introducing sciences which were unknown in the Far Maghrib at the time. Thereafter, Ibn al-Naḥwī moved to Fez, a city in which he was more successful and where he managed to convey his teachings to a number of important students who are discussed further below. Ibn al-Naḥwī never ceased being a dogged critic of myopic Mālikī jurists and their Almoravid patrons. He famously opposed the Almoravid sultan ‘Alī ibn Yūsuf’s (r. 500-537/1107-1143) order to burn Ghazālī’s works during the height of the anti-Iḥyā’ inquisition. Ibn al-Naḥwī’s spirit of ethical activism and willingness to speak truth to power is one which would be echoed by several other important reformist figures in the 12th century, including the Almohad revolutionary Ibn Tūmart (d. 524/1130).

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Despite some success, Ibn al-Naḥwī often found himself bitterly isolated during his career in the Far Maghrib. Ibn al-Naḥwī’s reformist teachings remained anathema to many Mālikī fiqahā’ who continued to apply political pressure on him and hamper his ability to teach at every opportunity. It didn’t help that he had a notoriously confrontational personality; such at least is the face he presented to his many enemies. The dreaded power of Ibn al-Naḥwī’s supplication was believed to be lethal for his foes: in Sijilmāssah, one opponent of Ibn al-Naḥwī famously met his end when a roof collapsed on him. In Fez at the turn of the 12th century, the phrase “I seek refuge from the curse of Ibn al-Naḥwī” become something of a meme. Eventually, Ibn al-Naḥwī was expelled from Fez by its Almoravid governor.

Around 500/1106, he moved back to the Eastern Maghrib, settling in the fortress city of Qal‘at Banī Ḥammād, the capital of of the Ṣanhājī Berber dynasty of the Banī Ḥammād, and major cultural and intellectual center at this time. At the city’s main mosque, Ibn al-Naḥwī taught Ashʿarī theology and uṣūl al-fiqh.

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68 See for example the notice of Ibn al-Barrā’ (Ibn Abbār, Tuhfat al-qādim, pp. 61-63) who was one of Ibn al-Naḥwī’s foes and who alleges that Ibn al-Naḥwī once issued a blanket disparagement of the calligraphic ability of all Andalusians. On the whole, reports of Ibn al-Naḥwī’s cantankerous personality may be exaggerated, more a reflection of the intransigent resistance he encountered at the hands of Mālikī legists. The negative anecdotes can be countered by other positive accounts which suggest Ibn al-Naḥwī was magnanimous, at least towards members of his own circle. For example, in one famous story, a student accidentally spilled ink (ḥibr) on Ibn al-Naḥwī’s favorite white garment. To allay his student’s extreme embarrassment, Ibn al-Naḥwī quipped: “I was just wondering what color I should dye this garment (kuntu aqūl ayy lawn aṣbigh bi-hi hadhā al-thawb), clearly now I shall dye it the color ink (fa-al-ān aṣbighˈhu ḥibrīyan).” Cited in ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, Kitāb al-ʿumr, vol. 1, p. 466.

69 As Cornell sees it, this phrase would have been uttered with all due solemnity. I would hypothesize that, if it was used by his foes, it may have been used in more of a disparaging way. Without committing to one interpretation or the other, my usage of the term “meme” here brings the meaning back to a more neutral, equivocal middle ground: the term, which is of recent but apparently pre-social media origins (ca. 1976), is defined in Merriam-Webster as “an idea, behavior, style, or usage that spreads from person to person within a culture”.

70 Golvin, EI2, “Ḳal‘at Banī Ḥāmmād”
Ibn al-Naḥwī’s written legacy is famous primarily for the poem known as *al-Munfarijah*.\(^{71}\) Of his doctrinal works, biographers tell us that Ibn al-Naḥwī authored several, but no specific titles are given. Only scattered fragments of his doctrinal writings survive. One is a short council on the virtue of reliance on God (*tawakkul*) he gave towards the end of his life (*waṣīyat wafātihi*).\(^{72}\) In addition, the recently-discovered Sufi writings of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Mahdawī, a prominent disciple of Abū Madyan and the famous Ifrīyan mentor of Ibn ‘Arabī, contain numerous references to Ibn al-Naḥwī as well as direct quotes from his presumably lost works.\(^{73}\) It has been suggested that Ibn al-Naḥwī’s influence is so pervasive in Mahdawī’s writings that a full reassessment of his legacy is in order.\(^{74}\) Ibn al-Naḥwī’s teachings may have very well had an impact on a wider a constellation of Ifrīqyan Sufis of the early 13\(^{th}\) century which, besides Mahdawī, also includes figures like Abū Yūsuf al-Dahmānī and Abū Saʿīd al-Bājī, two of Ḥarrālī’s direct mentors. A cursory look at the material attributed to Ibn al-Naḥwī reveals

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\(^{71}\) Known also as *Umm al-faraj*, and *al-faraj ba’d al-shiddah*, and *al-Naḥwīyah*, Ibn al-Naḥwī’s thirty-eight-line poem opens with the lines *ishtadday azmatu tanfarijī*. In the following centuries, many authors took to “amplifying” (*takhmīs*) the poem as well as writing commentaries on it. Several of these commentaries have printed editions. The British Library also conserves a poem by Ibn al-Naḥwī titled *Qaṣīdah fi istinzāl ghayth al-faraj* (OR 13057/12).

\(^{72}\) According to ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, the short writ (*maqālah*) was written, not on his deathbed, but before his departure for the pilgrimage, though he was well advanced in years by then. The text is no more than thirty lines long and was preserved alongside a later commentary on Ibn al-Naḥwī’s *Munfarijah* (Berlin MS 1781 we 3981). The *waṣīyah* itself was edited by Boutshish as *Wathīqah fī al-taṣawwuf bi-al-Maghrīb al-islāmī: waṣīyat Abī al-Faḍl Yūsuf ibn Muḥammad al-Naḥwī al-Tawzarī in al-Manāhil* 21:52-53 (1996), pp. 298-301.

\(^{73}\) *al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Mahdawī wa-turāthihi al-ṣūfī*, ed. ‘Ubīd (Qartāj, 2016). This is an edition and a study of *al-Risālah al-Mahdawīyah*. In the period immediately following its composition, Mahdawī’s *Risālah* failed to garner much attention because the few copies that were in circulation were deemed to be of poor quality. The *Risālah* was reconstituted and rearranged by ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Bijā’ī (active 9\(^{th}/15\)th century) and presented under the title *Maḥaffājat al-qāṣidin wa-ḥujjat al-wājīdin*.

\(^{74}\) On Ibn al-Naḥwī’s effect on Mahdawī see ‘Ubīd’s analysis in *al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz*, pp. 102-106.
numerous possible parallels with the writings of Ḥarrālī, and I suspect further textual analysis will bear this out.⁷⁵ For now, however, our focus will remain on Ḥarrālī’s intellectual lineage as discerned in the biographical literature.

**Ibn al-Rammāmah⁷⁶ (d. 567/1172)**

The theologian Ibn al-Rammāmah was one of Ibn al-Naḥwī’s most influential pupils. His career spanned the later Almoravid and early Almohad period. Ibn al-Rammāmah’s encounter with Ibn al-Naḥwī appears to have occurred early on in his hometown of Qal‘at Banī Ḥammād, that is to say, after Ibn al-Naḥwī had returned from his career in the Far Maghrib and prior to Ibn al-Rammāmah setting off on his.⁷⁷ Ibn al-Rammāmah would initially travel to Cordoba where he studied under Abū Bakr Ibn ‘Arabī (d. 543/1148) and Abū al-Walīd Ibn Rushd (d. 595/1198).⁷⁸ Most of his career, however, would be spent in the city of Fez.

Ibn Rammāmah inherited Ibn al-Naḥwī’s propensity for the theoretical sciences (al-‘ulūm al-nazarīyah), or what is also expressed as ‘ulūm al-dirāyah, a broad categorization which comprises the disciplines of legal theory (uṣūl al-fiqh), theology (uṣūl al-dīn), and even in some

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⁷⁵ It is worth noting that the biographical literature has preserved a direct reference by Ḥarrālī to Ibn al-Naḥwī, albeit it is a highly terse and cryptic one. In the *Sabk*, Ḥarrālī refers to Ibn al-Naḥwī and his Daqā‘iq, possibly a reference to a title of a lost work. In the same breath, Ḥarrālī also refers to the Ḥaqā‘iq (presumably the Ḥaqā‘iq al-tafsīr) of the famous Sufi of Nishāpūr Sulamī (d. 412/1021). See Ḥarrālī’s notice in Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, *Sabk*, p. 90.


⁷⁷ This estimation is based on the relative proximity of Ibn al-Naḥwī death date (513/1119) and Ibn al-Rammāmah’s birth date (479/1089 or 487/1094).

⁷⁸ Some biographers cast doubt on the claim that Ibn al-Rammāmah studied with Ibn Rushd. This is possibly because Ibn al-Rammāmah (b. 479/1089 or 487/1094) was 30 years older than Ibn Rushd (b. 520/1126).
cases, philosophy and taṣawwuf. The dirāyah category typically stands in contrast to that of ‘ulūm al-riwāyah, which includes the science of reported traditions (ḥadīth) as well as jurisprudence (fiqh), especially insofar as it is based on juridical precedent. The binary dirāyah/riwāyah corresponds more or less to that of ‘aql/naqīl, accenting the difference between the qualitative, creative operations of the mind and the more quantitative, rote type of knowledge that is transmitted.

Like his mentor, Ibn al-Rammāmah also had a predilection for the works of Ghazālī. One of his reported accomplishments was producing an abridgement of the Iḥyā’ (ikhtaṣara kitāb al-īḥyā’). Ibn Rammāmah was also partial to the Shāfi‘ī school of law and often touted Ghazālī’s al-Baṣīṭ fī al-madh‘hab, one of the key texts of Shāfi‘ism. But as the titles of some of his other attributed works suggest, he was equally competent in the Mālikī school of law.79 For example, his al-Tafāṣṣī ‘an fawā‘id al-taqāṣṣī appears to be an abridgement of al-Taqaṣṣī li-mā fi al-Muwaṭṭa’ min ḥadīth al-Nabīy by Ibn Ḥabīb al-Barr al-Numayrī80 (d. 463/1070), a distinguished Ẓā‘ifah period. Another title attributed to Ibn Rammāmah is al-Tabyīn fī sharḥ al-Talqīn, a commentary on al-Talqīn fī al-fiqh al-Mālikī by al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Wahhāb81 (d. 422/1031), a renowned legist of the “Irāqī” school of the Mālikism. Additionally, and despite most of his

80 Pellat, EI2, “Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr”.
biographers placing him firmly on the “dirāyah” side of the scholarly spectrum, Ibn al-
Rammāmah’s appears to have been a respected transmitter of hadīth.  

What is somewhat paradoxical is the divergent fortunes of the careers of Ibn al-Rammāmah
and Ibn al-Naḥwī. Indeed, the historian Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik reports that towards the middle his
career—long after he had imbibed the usūlī orientation of Ibn al-Naḥwī—Ibn al-Rammāmah was
specially favored by the Almoravid Sultan ‘Alī ibn Yūsuf ibn Tāshfīn (r. 500-537/1106-1143)
and granted a seat at his scholarly council. Then, in 536/1141, Ibn Rammāmah was appointed by
the sultan to the position of qāḍī of Fez. This is the very same ‘Alī ibn Tāshfīn who had
apparently allowed his Mālikī advisors to persuade him of the need to incinerate Ghazālī’s works
in 503/1109 and was vehemently repudiated for it by Ibn al-Naḥwī. Confusingly, this same
Almoravid sultan would soon prosecute a second auto-da-fé of Ghazālī’s works in 538/1143.

It is not immediately clear why Ibn al-Rammāmah was able to win Almoravid patronage
while Ibn al-Naḥwī was hounded throughout his career. It is reasonable to suppose that Ibn al-
Rammāmah possessed more tact than his fiery teacher. There may have been an affinity between
the Almoravid Sultan and Ibn al-Rammāmah, a personal connection which overrode any
doctrinal aberrance the latter may have exhibited or been accused of by Mālikī ideologues. Still,
it should be noted that Ibn al-Rammāmah was removed from his post as qāḍī after a short tenure
of only a year—even though most sources characterize his job performance as commendable
(ḥumidat sīratuhu).  

82 Several students claim Ibn al-Rammāmah in their chains of transmission. We learn for example that in
addition to advising Salāljī in matters of theology, Ibn al-Rammāmah would also transmit to him the
Sunan of al-Tirmīdhī. Other students of Ibn al-Rammāmah allege that he taught the Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī.
See Bakhtī, Salāljī, p. 130.

83 It should be mentioned that among Ibn al-Rammāmah’s lauded acts as qāḍī was issuing an ordinance
prohibiting Fez’s Jewish community from acquiring land and erecting new religious buildings.
eve of the second auto-da-fé of Ghazālī’s works in 538/1143, he may have become implicated in the ongoing polemics after all.

And yet, unlike Ibn al-Nahwī who was banished from Fez, Ibn al-Rammāmah stayed on in the city until his death. He lived to see the transition from Almoravid to Almohad rule. One wonders if Ibn al-Rammāmah had dissimilated his Shāfi‘ī and Ghazālian leanings during the Almoravid rule, allowing himself to express his true beliefs only after the Almohad takeover. The biographical literature portrays Ibn al-Rammāmah as a tireless educator who instructed students well into old age, giving the impression that he was particularly active in his later years. Some of Ibn al-Rammāmah’s students went on to have distinguished careers including Abū al-Ḥasan Ibn Khiyār84 (d. after 601/1204) and the influential theologian al-Salājī who is discussed in more detail below. Other students of Ibn Rammāmah, such Abū Dharr al-Khushānī and Abū al-Ṣabr al-Fihrī, would be direct teachers of Ḥarrālī.

Ibn Ḥirziḥīm85 (d. 559/1164)


Another leading proponent of uṣūl, as well as of taṣawwuf, in the late Almoravid period was ‘Alī Ibn Ḥirzihim. Still celebrated today as “Sīdī Ḥarāzem” of Fez, he came from a distinguished Fez-based family of religious scholars. Sources indicate that Ibn Ḥirzihim was well versed in the traditional religious sciences like fiqh, ḥadīth, and tafsīr, having studied these under his father Ismā‘īl86 as well as under more renowned names like Abū Bakr Ibn al-‘Arabī. Ibn Ḥirzihim also studied uṣūl under Ibn al-Naḥwī, and inherited a bit of the latter’s fiery ethical activism. Ibn Ḥirzihim’s most influential teacher was his uncle Abū Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Ibn Ḥirzihim87 who had travelled to the East and studied directly under Ghazālī. This uncle was the founder of a renowned Sufi hermitage (rābiṭah) in Fez, which also doubled as a major center for the dissemination of uṣūl and the teachings of Ghazālī. Abū al-Ḥasan would eventually take over the leadership of the rābiṭah from his uncle.

But despite his uncle’s fervent devotion to the teachings of Ghazālī, Abū al-Ḥasan was initially equivocal regarding the Ḥiyā’. If some sources are to be believed, he may have even supported the second auto-da-fé. However, after a dream in which the Prophet ordered him to be whipped for disparaging the Ḥiyā’, Ibn Ḥirzihim had a change of heart and became one of the most ardent champions of al-Ghazālī’s brand of uṣūl-taṣawwuf synthesis in the Far Maghrib.88

Such was his devotion to the Ḥiyā’ that he had his students copy the entire work once every year.

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88 In Subkī’s version of the story, Ibn Ḥirzihim was one of the main instigators of the second auto-da-fé of the Ḥiyā’ and alleged that its contents represented an innovation contrary to the sunnah. On the eve of the planned book burning, Ibn Ḥirzihim had a dream of the Prophet and the companions ‘Umar and Abū
Ibn Ḥirzihim’s advocacy of Ghazālī’s teachings and his vociferous criticism of other aspects of Almoravid rule, such as their ethnic discrimination, brought him into direct confrontation with the regime. Ibn Ḥirzihim’s rābiṭah in Fez was forcibly shut down and he himself was imprisoned for a time before eventually being brought to Marrakesh. It was in the Almoravid capital that Ibn Ḥirzihim famously condemned the Sultan ‘Alī ibn Yūsuf’s decision to deny Ibn Barrajān a proper burial. After Ibn Ḥirzihim rallied the population of Marrakesh to the defense of maltreated Andalusian mystic, the Sultan was forced to stand down. This incident further undermined the legitimacy of an already beleaguered Almoravid regime.

Ibn Ḥirzihim is also recognized as one of the pioneering figures of the Moroccan Path of Blame (ṭarīq al-malāmah). Besides the Iḥyā’, one of the other texts he put a cardinal emphasis on was Muḥasibī’s work on Sufi psychology and ethics Kitāb al-ri‘āyah li-ḥuqūq Allāh. Ibn Ḥirzihim is regarded as one of the most influential Moroccan Sufis of the formative period whose legacy affected important figures like Abū Madyan (d. 594/1198), Abū Ya‘zā Yallanūr (d. 572/1177). Ibn Ḥirzihim also influenced the figure of Abū al-Ṣabr al-Fihrī, who would later be Ḥarrālī’s first Sufi master.

**Salaljī**

The author of the Iḥyā’ was also present. “That man is an enemy of mine (ḥādhā khaṣmī)” Ghazālī declared, pointing to Ibn Ḥirzihim. He then handed the Prophet a copy of the Iḥyā’ and remonstrated: “O Messenger of God, look upon it (unẓur fīh) and if it is indeed as this man claims—an innovation contrary to your sunnah—then I will repent unto God. But if the work is something which you deem good, requite me over my foe (inṣifnī min khaṣmī).” The Prophet looked at the work page by page until he reached the end and said: “By God this is something good (shay’ ḥasan).” Abū Bakr and ‘Umar also examined the work and concurred with the Prophet’s judgment. The Prophet then ordered that Ibn Ḥirzihim be stripped of his clothes and whipped for slander. But after only five lashes, Abū Bakr said: “O Messenger of God he [Ibn Ḥirzihim] only did so out of commitment to your sunnah and a desire to glorify it (ijtihādan fī summatika wa-ta’ẓīman)”. Ghazālī thereupon forgave him. It is said that Ibn Ḥirzihim felt the pain of the lashes for weeks to come, and died with the whip markings on his back.

‘Uthmān al-Salāljī was one of the leading proponents of Ash‘arī theology during the tumultuous period of transition from Almoravid to Almohad rule. Early in his career, he broke with his teacher Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Tādilī, a conservative Mālikī jurist with whom he had been studying Mukhtāṣar of Ibn Abī Zayd. This rupture seems to have coincided with Salāljī’s budding interest in kalām, following his chance discovery of a copy of al-Juwaynī’s Kitāb al-irshād (The Book of guidance) and his al-Taqrīb. After he brought these works to the attention of his other, more open-minded mentors—Ibn al-Rammāmah and Ibn Ḥirzihim—Salāljī was encouraged to continue exploring this new science.91

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90 Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Isá al-Tādilī, a Mālikī jurisconsult based in Fez who flourished during the period of Lantunah. He does not have much a presence in the biographical record. His son Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh has notices in Ibn Abbār’s Takmilah and elsewhere. See Bakhtī, Salāljī, pp. 127-9.

91 Another anecdote related by the hagiographer al-Tādilī exemplifies the tension of the final years of Almoravid rule and the novelty of the discipline Salāljī was determined to pursue. Salāljī reportedly had a vivid dream of two men who approached him: one placed his hand on Salāljī’s chest, which opened up, and the other began filling the cavity with salt. Salāljī awoke from the dream and sought the khaṭīb of the Qarawiyyīn mosque, one Mahdī ibn ‘Īsá, who indicated that the meaning of the dream concerned his study of kalām. The khaṭīb apparently interpreted this dream as good omen and encouraged Salāljī to persist in his studies, telling him that he was destined to receive deep insights into that science (ṣa-yufatah la-ka fīh). As for Mahdī ibn ‘Īsá, his tenure as khaṭīb lasted only five months. The recently victorious Almoḥads had him replaced in 540/1145 with one who spoke Berber, as stipulated in the newly instituted state policy that all khaṭībs and imams should be bilingual. On Mahdī ibn ‘Īsá see Ibn Abī Zayr’, Anīṣ, p. 71. Jaznā’ī, Zahrah, p. 56. Ibn al-Qāḍī, Jadhwah, pp. 56-7.
Ibn Ḥirziḥim consented to help Salāljī study the *Irshād*, though from the outset he issued a caveat to his student: “I do not know [this work] well, but if you are happy for me to teach that of it which I know then [let us] study it” (*lā ujīduh, fa-in qana’ta minnī bi-ta’līm mā a’lamuhu, fa-unẓurhu*). Ibn Ḥirziḥim was able to help explain at least some parts of the work to his student even if, being untrained in the discipline of *kalām*, he was stumped by other parts. By the time the two had finished reading the *Irshād*, the perspicacious student had committed the text to memory.

A few years later, after an abortive attempt to travel to the Mashriq, Salāljī was still on a quest to find a true master of Ash‘arī *kalām*. It was in Marrakesh that Salāljī finally found the ideal teacher in the form of Abū al-Ḥasan Ibn al-Ishbīlī (d. 567/1171). Known also as al-Uṣūlī, this teacher would help him perfect his understanding of the *Irshād* and obviate the need for travel to the East. In time, Salāljī himself would also earn the laqab “al-Uṣūlī”. Ambitious and

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92 When he arrived in Bijāyah, Salaljī found himself imprisoned alongside a host of other travelers who had been heading East. The reasons for this remain obscure but there were almost certainly political in nature. The event occurred around the year 547/1152 when Bijāyah fell to ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Mu’min al-Kūmī (son of the Almohad caliph ‘Abd al-Mu’min). After a reportedly harrowing escape from prison, Salaljī returned to Fez. On the Almohad capture of Bijāyah, see Valérien, *Bougie*, p. 48.


politically savvy, Ibn al-Ishbīlī used his close ties to the Almohad court to advance the career of Salāljī and his others protégés. Salāljī, however, does not appear to have been cut from the same cloth as his teacher. After attaining his educational goals with Ibn al-Ishbīlī, Salāljī left Marrakesh in what appears to be a conscious decision to extricate himself from Almohad politics and the snare of worldly life.

Back in Fez, Salāljī’s re-entry into the city’s scholarly circles initially ran into complications. His financial situation was so tenuous that his friends gave him the nickname “the needy beggar” (al-faqīr al-muḥtāj). In addition, Salāljī’s attempt to teach Ashʿarī kalām on the basis of the Irshād initially encountered resistance from the old guard of Fez, possibly because of a lingering Mālikī aversion to kalām. There may have also been an ethnic prejudice involved, given Salāljī’s Berber background. At the time, this animus inspired Salāljī to compose bitter lines of poetry directed at the elites of Fez:

You have my assurances that you will never succeed
though you might drink the ink of books using the pages [as funnels]
You are a small people who think themselves big
does one measure up who equates pearls with oyster shells? [lit: appraises a pearl in oyster shell units]

Opposition to Salāljī’s teachings abated towards the end of his career. In fact, Salāljī’s sessions at the Qarawiyyīn mosque were increasingly popular precisely because Ashʿarī doctrine corresponded, broadly speaking, with the officially promoted creed in the land. Acceptance of his teachings thus probably paralleled the consolidation of Almohad political power. Knowledge

95 Bakhtī, Salāljī, p. 147.

96 It should be noted that, in addition to kalām, Salāljī also found the time to teach hadīth and fiqh. Several of his students remember studying with him the hadīth works of Timīdhī in great depth. In this field, Salāljī opted to revert to the roots of Mālikism by teaching the original Mudawwānah, rather than the works of furū’ that proliferated previously during the Almoravid period. Salāljī also reportedly taught Abū al-Muẓaffar al-Samʿānī’s (d. 489/1096) al-Iṣṭiḥlām fi al-khilāf bayna al-imāmyn al-Shāfiʿī ʿwa-Abī Ḥanīfah. Cited in Bakhtī, Salāljī, p. 154. On Samʿānī see Dhahabī, Siyar, vol. 19, pp. 114-119, nr. 62.
of theology came to be regarded as a prized feather in the cap of many an ambitious scholar who aspired to work in the Almohad administration. Salāljī himself seems to have retained a degree of intellectual independence vis-à-vis Tumartian ideology: in his creedal manifesto, *al-Burhānīyah*, Salāljī appears to reject the doctrine of the infallibility of the Mahdī.

Salāljī’s influence in the domain of theology was such that Bakhtī, his modern editor, speaks of a Salāljian “school”. Two important students of Salāljī are Ibn al-Kattānī and Ibn Numuwī, both of whom in turn direct taught Ḥarrālī and are discussed in more detail below. Other notable students of Salāljī include Sulaymān al-Saṭṭī (d. 607/1211) and Abū al-Ḥasan Ibn Khiyār, both of whom had also studied under Ibn al-Rammāmah. Ibn Khiyār, in particular, is said to have embodied a type of bold, enterprising scholarship that is typical among those in the orbits of Salāljī and Ibn al-Rammāmah. Salāljī’s *kalām* sessions in Fez also attracted students from Spain. For example, after a sojourn in the Maghrib, the Andalusian scholar ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Sakkūnī (d. circa 580/1184) returned to his native Cordoba where he appears to have actively propagated the “Salāljian” school of theology. Some of the Andalusians who came to study with Salāljī in


Fez ended up settling there, most notably Abū al-Ḥasan Ibn Mu’min\(^9\) (522-598/1128-1201), whose partially preserved Barnāmaj contains valuable biographical information on Salāljī.

Ibn Mu’min is practically our only source of information about another important Andalusian pupil of Salāljī, a saintly woman by the name of Khayrūnah\(^10\) (d. 594/1197). A regular attendee of Salāljī’s courses in Fez, it is apparently because of her that Salāljī’s Burhānīyah was put to paper in the first place. After every session, she would ask Salāljī to inscribe a concise, creedal statement on her tablet for her to take home, memorize, and reflect on. After she had memorized the principle she would return to him the following day having wiped the slate clean and ready to receive a new inscription. At some point, Khayrūnah arranged for all that she had memorized to be written down. And thus came to be the short, but widely influential, treatise that is known as the Burhānīyah, which is the only written work attributed to Salāljī. It is important to note that Salāljī’s lack of literary production appears to have stemmed partly from a conscious aversion to any form of celebrity. As the aforementioned story of Khayrūnah shows, the composition of the Burhānīyah was itself almost unintentional. When it

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\(^10\) Her name is also spelled as خَدْوَنَة though خَيْرُونَة is probably correct. Not a great deal is known about this figure, and there are no dedicated notices for her in the biographical literature. She is remembered for her knowledge and piety. Ibn Mu’min describes her thus: (kānat min al-ṣāliḥāt, al-qānitāt, al-zāhidāt, al-‘āqilāt, al-mu’mināt). Cited Bakhšī, Salāljī, pp. 170-171. See also Ibn al-Qāḍī, Jadhwat, p. 458. Manūnī, ‘Ulūm, p. 35. Khayrūnah is buried next to Salaljī and Darrās.
was finally written down, Salāljī’s student Ibn Mu’min offered to help edit and expand the work by adding an introduction. But Salāljī explicitly forbade his student from doing so, telling him: “I never intended it to be a work which could be recopied and made famous (yushtahar). Therefore, leave it as it is and do not add to it anything that might derail from its intended purpose”.101

In the event, Salāljī’s creedal manifesto did indeed become famous, and numerous commentaries on it were written in the following three centuries. Salāljī is also memorialized in the hagiographical literature as an important figure of 6th/12th century Maghribī sufism. There is a notice dedicated to him, for example, in Tādili’s famous Tashawwuf. As stated earlier, Salāljī was a disciple of the famous mystic-cum-İḥyā’-scholar Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Ḥirzihim of Fez. The latter’s malāmatī way reportedly had a deep influence on him, as did the classic Sufis works of the East. Even Salāljī’s education under Ibn al-Ishbīlī involved the careful study of Muḥasibī’s Kitāb al-ri‘āyah li-ḥuqūq Allāh.102

Although many of Salāljī’s students developed an inclination to Sufism, Salāljī is not regarded as a spiritual master in the full sense of guiding adepts on the path. Nor is he the author of miraculous feats. But he is celebrated for his role in reforming the core creedal beliefs the people of the Maghrib—he is also recognized as “the savior of the people of Fez from anthropomorphism” (munqidh ahl Fās min al-tajsīm).103 In addition, Salāljī’s dedication to

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101 Cited in Bakhtī, Salāljī, p. 160.


103 It is also significant that Salāljī is buried next to Darrās ibn Ismā’īl (d. 357/968), a Maliki legist from the Idrīsid era who during his career in Fez worked to disseminate Sahnūn’s (d. 240/854) Mudawwanah al-kubrā, the famous compendium on juridical practice. Darrās operated at a time when Maliki law had not yet become the official legal school of the Far Maghrib and most ulama followed Hanafi or “Kufan” jurisprudence. The uphill battle fought by this reform-minded scholar is evident from the fact that, like Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi’ī (d. 204/820) and other early reformers in Islam, Darrās plied his trade at a private mosque (masjid) on the Andalusian side of Fez. As Cornell adduces: “The fact that a scholar of
scholarship and his shunning of the opportunities for material gain, political advancement, and scholarly fame were exactly the sort of visible, heroic acts of piety that early Moroccan hagiographers sought to document.

**Ibn al-Kattānī**

We now come to a discussion of the figures who influenced Ḥarrālī directly. As one of the most important students of Salāljī, Ibn al-Kattānī took over the chair of ‘aqidah and usūl at the Qarawīyīn after his master had passed away. Remarkably, despite Ibn al-Kattānī’s importance, the biographical information on him is sparse. Little is known about Ibn al-Kattānī’s early career, besides being attached to Salāljī. Among the few biographical tidbits related about Ibn al-Kattānī is that he was courted by the Almohad Sultan al-Manṣūr who wanted him to move to Marrakesh and join the talabah corps, an elite body of scholars and advisors. On one occasion, the Sultan Darrāṣ’ stature did not teach in the major congregational mosques in the city, such as al-Qarawīyyīn, ash-Shurafā’, or al-Andalus, is evidence of the disputes that must have raged between this Maliki activist and Fez’s pro-Idrisid ulama, who resented his criticisms of their ‘Alid politics and Kufan methodology.” It should be noted that while Darrāṣ would certainly not have considered himself a Sufi, he did come the memorialized, through the prism of later hagiographers, as a ṣāliḥ (a Qur’ān-derived topos, foundational for the Moroccan paradigm of sainthood) and a watad al-ard (anchor of the earth) by virtue of his upholding the normative values of Sunni Islam. The proximity of the graves of these two intellectual reformers from Fez—Darrāṣ and Salāljī—reflects the perception that they were both reformists fighting uphill battles. Jaznā’ī, Zahrat al-Ās, pp. 20-22. Kattānī, Salwat al-anfās, vol. 2, pp. 197-200, nr. 616. Abū Zayd al-Fāsī, Mashāhīr ahl Fās, pp. 27-28. Cornell, Realm, pp. 9-11. Makdisi, The Rise of Colleges, p. 21.

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105 The talabah corps is discussed in more detail below in chapter three, in the subsection on Ḥarrālī’s teacher Ibn al-Qaṭṭān.
sent his personal physicians to care for Ibn al-Kattānī after learning that he was ill. But the Sultan’s overtures were never accepted. Ibn al-Kattānī is depicted in the biographical literature as being cut of the same world-renouncing cloth as his mentor Salāljī. Ibn al-Kattānī spent his career withdrawn at the Qarawiyīn university and devoted his life to oral instruction. Fortunately, this aloofness did not unduly offend the Sultan: Ibn al-Kattānī was held in such high esteem by the Almohads that upon his death, al-Manṣūr’s successor was reportedly in attendance at his funeral.

Ibn al-Kattānī’s sessions at the Qarawiyīn revolved around Salaljī’s Burhānīyah and Juwaynī’s Kitāb al-Irshād, which Ibn al-Kattānī had studied under the direction of al-Salaljī). Two works have been attributed to Ibn al-Kattānī which, although not particularly voluminous, seem to have had an impact on later generations of Maghribī scholars. First to note is Ibn al-Kattānī’s didactic poem on uṣūl al-fiqh, a section of which has been preserved. The second is Ibn al-Kattānī’s a commentary on his master’s al-Burhānīyah, although only fragments of this work appear extant. Following the example of his master, it is likely that Ibn al-Kattānī

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106 I have not found any solid evidence of Ibn al-Kattānī ever traveling outside of Fez. However, Bakhtī states (Salāljī, p. 162) that Ibn al-Kattānī shuttled between Fez, Andalusia, and Qayrawān, and that at some point he fled from Andalusia for unknown reasons. As a source of this information he cites a manuscript of Yafranī’s Mabāḥith (fol. 93). But in Bakhtī’s own recent edition of the Mabāḥith, I found no trace of these biographical details.


108 Ibn Rushayd, Mil’, vol. 2, pp. 225-6. This is in the notice of Abū Ja‘far al-Lubbalī who claims to have learned the poem from one Abī Bakr Yahyā ibn Thabit al-Bahrānī, who was allegedly a direct student of Ibn al-Kattānī.

deliberately curtailed his literary output out of modesty and a desire to remain anonymous. It may also be that Ibn al-Kattānī was convinced that oral instruction was the most effective means of influencing his intellectual milieu.

Ibn Ṭawwāḥ specifies that Ḥarrālī studied *kalām* and *uṣūl al-fiqh* with Ibn al-Kattānī. We can be reasonably certain that this education took place in Fez in the late 1190s. In his later career, Ḥarrālī appears to have continued the tradition of teaching the *Irshād* to his students. In addition to Ḥarrālī, several other *dirāyah*-oriented students of Ibn al-Kattānī went on to become recognized as specialists of *uṣūl*. For example, Abū al-Ḥajjāj al-Mukallātī (d. 626/1229) penned an Ashʿartie refutation of Avicennan eternalist cosmology titled *Lubāb al-ʿuqūl fī al-radd ʿalā al-falāsifah fī ʿilm al-uṣūl*. Another student of Ibn al-Kattānī was Tāj al-Dīn al-

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110 See Ḥarrālī’s notice in Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, *Sabk*.

111 In Damascus during the final months of his life, Ḥarrālī’ reportedly dictated a work titled *Sharh al-Irshād* to his student Salāwī. Ibn Rushayd, *Mil’*, vol. 2, p. 301.

112 Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Muʿizz al-Mukallātī. Studied the *uṣūl* under Ibn al-Kattānī and Ibn Numuwi. A wealthy individual but who had no immediate family. al-Mukallātī was held in high esteem by six successive Almohad sultans starting with al-Maṣūrī. Travelled to Andalusia the first time in 591 as part of the imperial train; that is when sultan al-Maṣūrī got to know him and elevated him to a high position among his personal retinue of scholars. Then a second time with al-Maṣūrī’s son al-Nāṣir in 607. Later sultan al-Muṣṭaṣir would appoint him qādī of the town of Naṭfīs—near Marrakesh and quite important during Almohad times. al-Mukallātī occupied that post until his death. He was apparently the author of a few works of modest length on *kalām* and *uṣūl al-fiqh*. The only title to have survived is his *Lubāb al-ʿuqūl fī al-radd ʿalā al-falāsifah fī ʿilm al-uṣūl* (published Cairo, 1977). Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik, *Dhayl*, vol. 5, pp. 350-3, nr. 229. On Naṭfīs see Ḥimyaṭī, *Rawl*, pp. 578-9.

113 Edited by Fawqīyah Maḥmūd (Cairo, 1977) on the basis of a single manuscript held at the Qarawīyīn University in Fez. See also Adouhane *Une critique aš’arite post-rūšdienne de la cosmologie d’Averroès : traduction et commentaire de la Quintessence des Intellects d’Abū al-Haǧǧāǧ al-Miklātī* (m.1229) (diss. ENS Paris 2015), and Adouhane *al-Miklātī, A Twelfth Century Aš’arite Reader of Averroes* (Arabic Sciences and Philosophy, 2012).
Sharīshī\textsuperscript{114} (d. 641/1243), a famed Sufi polymath who spent most of his career in the Mashriq and played a key role in the transmission of Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī’s (539-632/1145-1234) influence to the Maghrib. Other students noted for their association with \textit{taṣawwuf} are Abū al-Ḥasan Ibn al-‘Aṭṭār\textsuperscript{115} (d. ca. 604/1208) and ‘Abd Allāh al-Nāmisī\textsuperscript{116} (d. after 647/1249). Some of the Ibn al-Kattānī’s students do not seem to have specialized in \textit{kalām} or been attracted to \textit{taṣawwuf} but were nevertheless prominent for other reasons. These include Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shārrī\textsuperscript{117} (d. 571-649/1176-1251), founder of the earliest \textit{madrasah} in the Maghrib; the bellettrists

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  \item \textsuperscript{114} Sharīshī is a figure who shares several Maghribī teachers with Ḥarrālī and who, like the latter, emigrated to the Mashriq and died there. He will be discussed in more detail in a later chapter, since he and Ḥarrālī appear to have spent time together in Egypt during their final years.
  
  
  
‘Umar al-Rundi\textsuperscript{118} (d. 616/1219) and Ibn Kharūf (d. 1212), the latter being a teacher of Ḥarrālī as discussed further below. The hagiographer Abū al-‘Abbās al-‘Azāfī\textsuperscript{119} (d. 633/1236) was also presumably a student of Ibn al-Kattānī given that he refers directly to the latter’s testimony in his \textit{Di‘āmat al-yaqīn}.

As is the case with practically all of the theologians surveyed thus far, Ibn al-Kattānī appears to have been involved in \textit{taṣawwuf}, even if it is hard to verify what kind of spiritual method he practiced. There even exists scattered evidence that Ibn al-Kattānī was involved in some form of initiatic Sufism: the figure of Ibn Musdī (d. 663/1265) claims that he was initiated into \textit{taṣawwuf}—the expression used is “invested with the initiatic mantle”—at the hands of what he terms “disciples” or “companions” of Ibn al-Kattānī (\textit{labistu al-khirāq min...ашaab Abū ‘Abd}

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\item \textsuperscript{119} Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad...ibn Abī ‘Azafāḥ al-Lakhmī al-‘Azafī al-Sabtī. Born in Sabtah in 557/1162, ‘Azafī hailed from the great Banū ‘Aẓafī family which was involved in both scholarship and politics and ruled over the independent principality of Sabtah in the later Marinīd period. He studied under numerous reputable figures including Ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh al-Ḥijarī, Abū al-Qāsim ibn Ḥubaysh, Ibn Bashkawāl, Abū al-Qāsim al-Suhaylī, al-Qāsim ibn Daḥmān, and Aḥmad al-Andarshī (all of whom have been, or will be, discussed in the footnotes). ‘Azafī functioned as qāḍī of Sabtah for a time. He was well versed in \textit{fiqh}, \textit{ḥadīth}, probably theology as well, and was involved in Sufi circles. Besides \textit{Di‘āmat al-yaqīn}, other works of his include \textit{Minhāj al-rusūkh ilā ‘ilm al-nāsikh wa-al-mansūkh}, and \textit{al-Dhurr al-munaẓẓam fī mawlid al-nabīy al-mu’aẓẓam}. The latter title, translated by Cornell as \textit{The Pillar of certainty in the leadership of the God-conscious}, is believed to have “almost single-handedly legitimized the Prophet’s birthday as a holiday in the Far Maghirb”. See ‘Azafī’s notice written by his student Ibn Abī al-Rabī‘, \textit{Barnāmaj}, pp. 62-3, with additional biographical references. Benchekroun has a discussion of the life and works of ‘Azafī in \textit{La vie intellectuelle}, pp. 99-108. See also the discussion of \textit{Di‘āmat al-yaqīn} in Cornell, \textit{Realm}, 67-79.
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Allāh al-Kattānī). But in any case it should also be remembered that Ibn al-Kattānī’s primary mentor, Salāljī, was closely attached to the seminal Sufi figure of Ibn Ḥirziḥim. Additionally, a great number of Ibn al-Kattānī’s students were demonstrably inclined to taṣawwuf.

It is also worth mentioning that Ibn al-Kattānī features indirectly in later hagiographical literature. For example, in his work citing the virtues and preternatural feats of the illiterate saint Abū Ya’zā—called Di‘āmat al-yaqīn fī zi‘āmat al-muttaqīn (The Pillar of certainty in the leadership of the God-conscious)—the author al-‘Azafī (d. 633/1236) quotes Ibn al-Kattānī as a witness. It also interesting that, until recently, Ibn al-Kattānī was mistakenly considered to be the author of the hagiographical anthology al-Mustafād. On the surface, it would appear that this confusion stemmed from the similarities between Ibn al-Kattānī’s name and that of the work’s real author, Muḥammad al-Tamīmī (d. 1206/7). Is it possible that this misattribution was

120 This claim can be found in Ibn Rushayd’s (d. 1321) Mil’ al-ʿībah which contains the recopied doxology of an apparently lost work by Abū Bakr ibn Musdī (d. 663/1265) titled al-Muqaddimah al-muhtasibah bi-tawsīyat dhawī al-khiraq al-muntabasah. The doxology begins in vol. 2, p. 364 and Ibn al-Kattānī is mentioned on p. 370. The students of Ibn al-Kattānī mentioned are Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad ibn al-Qāsim “Ibn al-Baqqāl”, an apparent teacher of Ḥarrālī and who will be discussed below; and Abū al-Thanā’ Aḥmad ibn Abī al-Rabī’ “Ibn Ukht Nāḥīd”, an unidentified figure. It should be noted that the expression labs al-khirqah in used quite loosely in the text of the doxology. That is, among the figures that cited as having “invested” the author with the “khiriqah” there may have been some who would not consider themselves Sufis. However, one of Ibn Musdī’s other teachers was the Cairo-based Sufi traditionist al-Fakhr al-Fārisī (d. 622/1225) who was also a teacher of Ḥarrālī as discussed further below. On Ibn Musdī’s biography see Dhahabī, Tadhkirat, vol. 4, pp. 1448-50. Udfuwī, Badr, vol. 2, pp. 970-4, nr. 499.

121 ‘Azafī writes: “When word spread about this great man [Abū Yi’zzā] and his sanctity became recognized, and his miraculous power became widely known, I [‘Azafī] heard the esteemed jurist, the teacher of the two teachers (ustādh al-ustādhayn), the last of the theologians (ākhir al-mutakallimīn) Ibn al-Kattānī saying: I know of no other walī from among the awliyā’ of God whose miraculous feats have been verified by so many sources (thubitat karāmātihi bi-al-tawāthur) except for this blessed Shaykh.” ‘Azafī, Di‘āmat, p. 2.

122 The full title of the work is al-Mustafād fī manāqib al-‘ubbād bi-madinay Fās wa-mā yalīhā min al-bilād (“What benefit can be drawn from the virtues of the pious of the city of Fez and neighboring communities”). Its author, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Qāsim ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Tamīmī, was a Sufi and a traditionist who spent some years in the Mashriq studying ḥadīth under Abū al-Ṭahir al-Silafi. Tamīmī was also one of Ibn ‘Arabi’s first Sufi masters. The biographers
partly an effect of Ibn al-Kattānī’s reputation as a Sufi or, alternatively, a cause for the amplification of such a reputation?

Finally, it cannot go unmentioned that Ibn al-Kattānī was briefly the teacher of Ibn ‘Arabī during one of the latter’s visits to Fez. Ibn al-Kattānī is mentioned on several occasions in the *Futūḥāt* and is recognized as the premier authority of *kalām* in the Maghrib. But Ibn ‘Arabī does take issue with some of Ibn al-Kattānī’s theological positions. One of these, for example, concerns the epistemological possibility of acquiring knowledge through divine inspiration (*kashf, al-’ilm al-mawhūb*) without also knowing the discursive proofs (*dalīl, al-burhān al-‘aqlī*) that underpin this knowledge. According to the *Futūḥāt*, Ibn al-Kattānī’s was of the opinion that this was not possible. However, given what we now know about Ibn al-Kattānī and his reverence for the illiterate saint Abū Ya’zā, perhaps Ibn ‘Arabī’s characterization of Ibn al-Kattānī’s positions is not entirely accurate, or maybe Ibn al-Kattānī’s views on the issue evolved.

Another position which Ibn ‘Arabī argues against in the *Futuḥāt* is Ibn al-Kattānī’s Ashʿarite view that the divine attributes exist as distinct from the divine essence, but that, at the same time, responsible for misattributing his *Mustafād* to Ibn al-Kattānī include Ibn al-Qāḍī (Jadhwah) and Jaznāʾī (Zahrah). On Tamīmī see Addas, *Soufre*, 165-6.

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124 Ibn ‘Arabī, *Futūḥāt*, vol. 1, p. 244, 482; vol. 5, pp. 11-12; vol. 7, p. 32-3, 118.

125 It is interesting that, later in his career, Ḥarrālī would come to revere the little known figure of Taqīy al-Dīn al-Mūṣilī. Like Abū Ya’zā, Mūṣilī was illiterate. But despite this Ḥarrālī lauded him as a “pillar of wisdom” (*min aṣāfīn al-hikmah*). Mūṣilī was reportedly also praised by Suhrawardī, the founder of the illuminationist school, who believed that Mūṣilī had realized—in a direct, pre-discursive way—the truths contained in his *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*. The figure of Mūṣilī is further discussed in the chapter on Bijāyah.
they have no existence outside the essence—in other words, that the attributes are not God but also not other than God.126

**Ibn al-Numuwi**127 (554-614/1159-1217)

A native of Fez, Ibn al-Numuwī took full advantage of the educational opportunities afforded to him in this vibrant intellectual center of the Maghrib. Ibn Numuwī studied under Aḥmad Ibn Maḏāʾ128 (513-592/1119-1195), a well-known grammarian and all-around polymath, mostly likely during the latter’s tenure as qāḍī of Fez. While still quite young, Ibn al-Numuwī also studied with Salāljī before his death in 1178.129 He then attached himself to Ibn al-Kattānī.

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126 In a passage of the *Futūḥāt* (trans. Addas), Ibn ‘Arabi’s articulates his position and rejects that of Ibn al-Kattānī: “Que Dieu soit Savant, Vivant, Pouvant, etc., tout cela aboutira à qualifier l’Essence divine d’imperfection; en effet, ce qui est parfait par l’adjonction de quelque chose est d’essence imparfaite par rapport à la perfection due a cetter adjunction. Or Il est parfait de par Son Essence même; par consequent, il est impossible d’ajouter quelque chose de distinct à Son Essence, mais il n’est pas impossible de lui attribuer des relations et des assignations. Quant à celui qui declare que ces attributs ne sont pas Lui et ne sont en même temps pas autres que Lui, c’est une affirmeration totalement erronée.” Addas, *Souffre*, p. 167. See also the original Arabic passage in Ibn ‘Arabi, *Futūḥāt*, vol. 7, pp. 32-3.


129 Ibn Numuwī’s (born 554/1159) studentship under Salāljī adds weight to Bakhtī’s fixing of Salāljī death date as 574/1178-9 rather than 564/1168-9 given by most biographers.
The latter reportedly held his pupil in high esteem and cherished the scholarly conversations (mudhākarāt) he had with him. Ibn al-Numuwī remained by his mentor’s side until Ibn al-Kattānī’s death in 596/1200.

Inclined to the theoretical sciences (al-dirāyah), Ibn Numuwī specialized in kalām and uṣūl al-fiqh. In the years following Ibn al-Kattānī’s death, Ibn al-Numuwī’s reputation as a scholar grew to the point where he was invited to teach in other urban centers. For a time, he taught in the Almohad capital, then in Seville. He returned to Fez in 613/1216-7 and took up teaching in the Eastern section of the Qarawiyyīn university until his death less than a year later. No titles are attributed to Ibn al-Numuwī by his biographers. However, Ibn Numuwī’s views on certain points of theology are cited in at least one later commentary on the Burhānīyah, which suggests that he penned some short theological tracts. What is noteworthy is that Ibn al-Numuwī’s views are cited right alongside those of such giants of Islamic theology as Juwaynī and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210).

The biographers of Ḥarrālī who mention his studentship under Ibn Numuwī provide us with little further information. It is reasonable to assume that Ḥarrālī studied kalām, Ibn Numuwī’s main specialty. It is also probable that their encounter occurred in Fez during a period roughly between 1200 to 1210. Ḥarrālī probably left the Maghrib by the time Ibn al-Numuwī traveled to teach in Marrakesh and Seville. Other students of Ibn al-Numuwī include the aforementioned Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shārī and Yūsuf al-Mukallātī, both of whom had previously studied with Ibn al-Kattānī. Possibly during his sojourn in Andalusia, Ibn Numuwī taught kalām to ʻAbd Allāh

130 On the issue of the permanence of accidents (baqāʿ al-aʿrād), the anonymous author of a commentary on the Burhānīyah points out that the view which affirms their permanence (al-aʿrād yajūz baqāʿ uhā) is maintained by the Muʿtazilites as well as by some Sunnis, namely, Ibn al-Khaṭīb [al-Rāzī], Abū al-Maʿālī [al-Juwaynī], and Abū al-Ḥajjāj Ibn al-Numuwī. Cited in Bakhtī, Salāljī, pp. 167-8.
Ibn al-Kammād\textsuperscript{131} (d. 619/1222) of Seville. Another Andalusian—‘Abd Allāh Ibn Bādīs\textsuperscript{132} (d. 622/1225)—crossed the straits to study with Ibn Numuwī in Fez before returning to teach the theoretical sciences (\textit{al-’ulūm al-naṣārīyah}) in Seville.

\textbf{Ibn al-Baqqāl\textsuperscript{133} (fl. 1200)}

Before I move on to discuss Ḥarrālī’s mentors in the areas of Sufism, belles-lettres, and \textit{ḥadīth}, it seems appropriate here to mention the obscure figure of Aḥmad ibn Qāsim Ibn al-Baqqāl al-Uṣūlī who appears to have been a theologian in a similar vein to the figures of Ibn al-Kattānī and Ibn al-Numuwī. However, this figure is so poorly defined in the biographical record that, to my knowledge, no single dedicated notice for him exists.\textsuperscript{134} One has to contend with sporadic mentions of him, as for example, in Ibn Rushayd’s \textit{Mīl’ al-’ībah}, where Ibn al-Baqqāl is listed as one of Ḥarrālī’s teachers.\textsuperscript{135} This same source also names Ibn al-Baqqāl as one of the scholars in Fez who mentored the Sufi theologian Tāj al-Dīn al-Sharīshī.\textsuperscript{136} Elsewhere in the

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\textsuperscript{133} Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad ibn Qāsim ibn al-Baqqāl al-Uṣūlī. This name is given in the notices of Ibn ‘Abd in Ibn al-Khaṭīb, \textit{Iḥātah}, vol. 2, p. 759; and in Ibn al-Qāḍī, \textit{Jadhwhah}, p. 231.
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\textsuperscript{134} Perhaps the only exception is the notice—barely two lines long—of Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad Ibn al-Baqqāl in Makhlūf, \textit{Shajarah}, vol. 1, p. 265, nr. 648. Despite the discrepancy in their names, this figure appears to correspond to our subject given that he appears to feature in the following page in the notices of Abū Muḥammad Śalāḥ (nr. 649) and Sharīshī (nr. 651). The author of the \textit{Shajarah} appears to have used manuscript sources which he does not reference.
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\textsuperscript{135} Ibn Rushayd, \textit{Mīl’}, vol. 2, pp. 307-8. This information is cited in the notice, and on the authority, of Salāwī, a figure originally from the Moroccan city of Salā (Salē) who will later become Ḥarrālī’s student in the Mashriq.
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\textsuperscript{136} Ibn Rushayd, \textit{Mīl’}, vol. 2, p. 297. This information is also cited in the notice of Salāwī (Ḥarrālī’s student). Salāwī studies under Sharīshī in Cairo and Fayyūm in the years 636 and 637—during the same period when he was a servant (\textit{khādim}) of Ḥarrālī, that is, a close disciple who looks after the master’s
\end{flushleft}
Mil’, Ibn Baqqāl is identified as a student—or possibly a disciple in some initiatic sense—of Ibn al-Kattānī: the figure of Ibn Musdī claims to have been invested with the initiatic mantle (labs al-khirqah) by Ibn Baqqāl and other associates (aṣḥāb) of Ibn al-Kattānī. In other sources, Ibn al-Baqqāl is counted among the teachers of Abū Muḥammad Śāliḥ al-Haskūrī (d. ca. 658/1260), a Mālikī scholar and uṣūl specialist from Fez.

**Ibn ‘Ābid**

Another figure whom the aforementioned Ibn al-Baqqāl reportedly tutored was Muḥammad Ibn al-‘Ābid al-Anṣārī. In fact, Ḥarrālī himself is alleged to have been the latter’s tutor in Fez.

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138 Abū Muḥammad Śāliḥ ibn Muḥammad al-Fāsī al-Haskūrī. After spending his early career in the Maghrib, during which he was an associate of the Sufi theologian ‘Abd al-Jalīl ibn Mūsá al-Qaṣrī (d. 668/1271-2), Haskūrī spent several years in Alexandria and then in Tūnis. See Ghabrīnī, ‘Unwān, pp. 265-6, nr. 391. Kattānī, *Salwah*, vol. 2, p. 275, nr. 489. Qarāfī, *Tawshīḥ*, p. 44, nr. 119. Gannūn, *Nubūgh*, vol. 1, pp. 145-6. Makhlūf, *Shajarah*, vol. 1, p. 266, nr. 651. The sources that list Ibn al-Baqqāl as a teacher of Abū Muḥammad Śāliḥ al-Haskūrī are Kattānī’s *Salwah* and Makhlūf’s *Shajarah*. Whereas Makhlūf, as mentioned, does not cite his sources, Kattānī cites the *Fahrasah* of Ibn Ghāzī (d. 1513) and that of al-Manjūr (d. 1586-7). Upon consulting these two works I have not been able to verify Kattānī’s statement to the effect that Haskūrī was a student of Ibn Baqqāl. Abū Muḥammad Śāliḥ al-Haskūrī of Fez should not be confused with the famous Sufi from Dukkālah Abū Muḥammad Śāliḥ al-Dukkālī al-Mājirī (550-631/1155-1234).


140 This information is given in Ibn al-‘Ābid’s notices in Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s *Iḥāṭah*, Ibn al-Qaḍī’s *Jadhwah*, and Bābā’s *Nayl*. See also Kh. 2011, pp. 98-9. The *Iḥāṭah* is the earliest source of this information and appears to be the basis of later sources. Note, however, that Ibn al-Khaṭīb (and Bābā) refer to the figure under whom Ibn ‘Ābid studied as al-záhid Abī al-Hasan Ibn Abī al-Mawālī (الموالي). Ibn al-Qaḍī gives the name as Abū al-Hasan al-Ḥarrālī. Ibn al-Qaḍī has at least some fragmentary information on Ḥarrālī since
Though nothing is known about the substance of Ibn al-‘Ābid’s studentship under either teacher, we know that Ibn al-‘Ābid went on to distinguish himself as a poet and a belletrist in Naṣrid Granada. In the early 1230’s, Ibn al-‘Ābid crossed the straights and served as kātib of Muḥammad I\(^1\) (r. 629-671/1232-1273), founder and first ruler of the Naṣrid kingdom in the far south of Spain. According to the historian and Granadian vizier Ibn al-Khaṭīb (d. 776/1374), Ibn al-‘Ābid actually tutored the other kuttāb of the chancellery. With a good memory for history and proficient in mathematics, Ibn al-‘Ābid was also charged with administrative and archival work (al-sijillāt wa-al-tawthīq). Ibn al-‘Ābid was also noted for his erudition in the field of ḥadīth, having famously committed to memory the entirety of Ṣabd al-Ḥaqq al-Ishbīlī’s al-Aḥkām.

Another notable accomplishment reported by biographers is Ibn al-‘Ābid’s abridgement of Zamakhsharī’s (d. 538/1144) taḥṣīl, a process which notably involved excising its Muʿtazilī content.

Since Ḥarrālī does not appear to have returned to the Far Maghrib after leaving early on, and since Ibn al-‘Ābid does not seem to have later travelled to the Mashriq, their encounter would have in all likelihood occurred during Ḥarrālī’s early years in the Far Maghrib—again, probably in Fez. In other words, Ibn ‘Ābid appears to be Ḥarrālī’s earliest known student. The fact that at this early stage Ḥarrālī was already instructing other students—or perhaps was entrusted by his masters to tutor younger pupils—would support the claims made by biographers like Ghubrīnī to

\(^1\) Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf ibn Naṣr ibn al-Aḥmar. Fernández-Puertas, EI2, “Naṣrids”.

he mentions the latter in the notice of Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn Ṭabarī. Ibn al-Khaṭīb, on the other hand, appears to have known nothing of Ḥarrālī identity, since he does not refer to Ḥarrālī (nor Mawālī) anywhere else in the Iḥāṭah. In addition, I have not identified any relevant figure named al-Mawālī in other sources from the era.
the effect that, even before he had left the Maghrib, the prodigious Ḥarrālī had already “attained such erudition that he surpassed his peers”. ¹⁴²

¹⁴² Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 143.
CHAPTER THREE: Early Maghribī taṣawwuf, Belletristic Circles, and the Cosmopolitan Almohad Milieu

This chapter examines the remainder of Ḥarrālī’s Maghribī teachers named in the biographical sources. In terms of Ḥarrālī’s doctrine and spiritual orientation, the most important of these is undoubtedly the Sufi traditionist Abū al-Ṣabr al-Fihrī of Sabtah (Ceuta). Though he may not have bequeathed much of a written corpus himself, Fihrī can be situated within a complex network of figures who did author doctrinal works or at least are connected with more well-known intellectual currents and spiritual lineages. Perhaps the most important aspect that Ḥarrālī may have directly inherited from Fihrī is the latter’s praxis-based, socially-conscious brand of orthodox mysticism and the facility with which he moved between the discursive worlds of exoteric Islam and taṣawwuf.

Less important as mentors of Ḥarrālī are the grammarians Abū Dharr al-Khusanī and Ibn Kharūf, and the top Almohad functionary Ibn al-Qaṭṭān. Their influence may be apparent in features of Ḥarrālī’s writings such as his deep knowledge of the sīrah, his citing of obscure ḥadīth, and his tendency to anchor his philosophical speculations in etymological definitions—these characteristics can be seen in works by Ḥarrālī like his tafsīr and his commentary on the ninety-nine names of the Prophets.
Abū al-Ṣabr al-Fihrī (d. 609/1212)\textsuperscript{143}

Although Ḥarrālī may have been introduced to ṭaṣawwuf via other Maghribī figures such as Ibn al-Kattānī, it is the hadīth scholar Abū al-Ṣabr al-Fihrī whom the biographical literature identifies as his first Sufi master.\textsuperscript{144} Ḥarrālī’s meeting with this ascetic traditionist took place in the northern city of Sabtah, Fihrī’s hometown on the Mediterranean coast. We know little, however, about what Ḥarrālī might have learned at Fihrī’s feet. At the same time, it is hard to pinpoint what doctrines Fihrī himself professed because no works of his have come down to posterity. Therefore, we must once again turn to the biographical literature in order to determine what sources influenced Fihrī’s worldview.

In many biographical sources, the predominant image of Fihrī is that of a pious hadīth transmitter. Indeed, Fihrī boasts strong credentials in the religious sciences. Because of Sabtah’s vital role as a gateway between the Maghrib and Spain, Fihrī had the opportunity to meet highly reputable Andalusian scholars who passed through the city like Abū al-Qāsim Ibn Ḥubaysh\textsuperscript{145}


\textsuperscript{144} This is according to Ibn Ṭawwāḥ (\textit{Sabk}, p. 84) who obtained this information from a figure called al-Shaykh Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Salāf khadīm [al-Ḥarrālī]. However, in a footnote the editor of the \textit{Sabk} notes that in one manuscript this figure is given as Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Salāwī. This is almost certainly correct, as Salāwī is a loyal student and servant of Ḥarrālī in Bijāyah and in the Mashriq. Further confirming this is the fact that in one of his notices (Ibn Rushayd, \textit{Mil’ al-‘aybah}, vol. 2, p. 308), Salāwī informs Ibn Rushayd that Ḥarrālī’s meeting with Fihrī occurred in the city of Sabtah, a precision not found in any other source.

\textsuperscript{145} Abū al-Qāsim ‘Abd al-Rahmān ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Yūsuf al-Anṣārī al-Andalusī al-Marrī, “Ibn Ḥubaysh”. A highly respected traditionist, historian, linguist, Qur’ān reciter, and orator. Born in Almeria, he lived in several Andalusian cities over the course of his career. Though Ibn Ḥubaysh’s own biographical notices don’t mention it, those of Fihrī clearly state that Ibn Ḥubaysh crossed the straight of
(504-582/1110-1186). Fihri himself travelled widely throughout the Maghrib region. In Fez, he studied under the usuli Ibn al-Rammamah; in Cordoba, under the traditionist Ibn Bashkwal146 (494-578/1101-1183). In Malaga, Fihri studied under the grammarians ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Suhayli147 (d. 581/1185) and Abū Muḥammad Ibn Daḥmān148 (d. 575/1180), as well as with the


146 Abū al-Qāsim Khalaf ibn ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Mas‘ūd ibn Mūsā ibn Bashkuwāl al-Anṣārī. He is also known as a historian and author of the Kitāb al-sila, a biographical dictionary of Andalusian scholars covering the era of the Tā’ifas (400-79/1010-86), through the Almoravids (r. 454-541/1062-1147) and up until the early Almohad period (r. 524-668/1130-1269). He was born in Cordoba to a non-Arab family with roots in the Valencia region. For a time he also lived in Seville where he studied under the widely renowned jurist and traditionist Abū Bakr Ibn al-‘Arabī (d. 543/1148) and the Qur’ān reciter Abū al-Ḥasan Shurayḥ ibn Muhammad (d. 539/1144). Ibn Abbār, Takmilah, vol. 1, pp. 459-62, nr. 848. Dhahabī, Siyar, vol. 21, pp. 139-43, nr. 71. Ávila, EI3, “Ibn Bashkwul”, with additional references.

147 ‘Abd al-Rahman ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad al-Khath’amī al-Suhayli, also known by three kunyas: Abū Zayd, Abū al-Qāsim, and Abū al-Ḥasan. Born circa 508/1114, Suhayli was a highly knowledgeable Andalusian linguist who also contributed to a variety of other disciples. Suhayli studied under several notable teachers including Abū Bakr ibn al-‘Arabī from whom he benefited in the areas of ḥadīth, usūl, and tafsīr. His most famous work is a commentary on Ibn Hishām’s biography of the Prophet titled al-Rawḍ al-unuf written in the year 569/1173-4. After his best known pupil (and biographer) Ibn Dīyāh presented al-Rawd al-unuf to the Almohad court in Marrakesh, Suhayli was invited to the imperial capital to lecture. He passed away while in the city. Suhayli is also the author of works dealing with aspects of Qur’ān such as al-Ta’rif wa-al-i’lām bi-mā ubhima fī al-Qur’ān al-‘azīz min al-asmā’ wa-al-a’lām, and Sharḥ āyat al-waṣyāh. Another work is Kitāb natā’ij al-fikr, on grammar. Many of Suhayli’s works have been published. Ibn Dīyāh, Mu’tārib, pp. 230-39. Ibn Abbār, Takmilah, vol. 3, pp. 164-5, nr. 2328. Ḍabbī, Bughyat al-multamis, p. 320, nr. 1025. Raven W., “al- Suhayli”, in EI2, with additional references. For a sample of his poetry see Tujībī, Zād al-musāfīr, pp. 91-2.

ḥadīth specialists Ahmad al-Andarshi\textsuperscript{149} (d. 581/1185), and Abū Isḥāq Ibn Qurqūl\textsuperscript{150} (505-569/1111-1174). Fihrī also studied Qur’ān recitation under al-Ashqar al-Dānī\textsuperscript{151} (d. 559/1164). Almost all of these aforementioned teachers of Fihrī were together copupils of the influential Andalusian theologian and jurist, Abū Bakr ibn al-‘Arabī (d. 543/1149), who played an important role in the Andalusian usūl movement and popularized the study of the Sunan of Tirmidhī.\textsuperscript{152}

\textsuperscript{149} Abū al-‘Abbās Ahmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Anṣārī, also known as al-Andarshi and Ibn al-Yatīm. Of Valencian origin, Andarshi spent his career in the cities of Malaga and Almeria. A Qur’ān reciter, traditionist, and linguist with an impressive roster of Andalusian teachers that includes Abū al-Walīd Ibn Rushd, Abū Bakr Ibn al-‘Arabī, Abū ‘Ali al-Šadafī, and Abū al-‘Abbās Ibn al-‘Arīf. Andarshi’s particular closeness to Ibn al-‘Arīf is a fact related to the author of the Dhayl by Fihrī himself. However, there is some controversy about Andarshi’s claim to have been the direct pupil of some of the other figures including especially Abū ‘Ali al-Šadafī (d. 514/1120). The lengthy notice of Andarshi in the Dhayl is mostly devoted to defending these claims. Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik, Dhayl, vol. 1, pp. 607-613, nr. 655. Ibn Abbār, Takmilah, vol. 1, pp. 175-6, nr. 221. Ibn Abbār, Mu’jam, pp. 53-4, nr. 38. Ṭabīb, Bughyat al-multamis, p. 144, nr. 370.


\textsuperscript{152} Basing himself on Urvoy’s in-depth sociological study (Le Monde des Ulémas andalous), Cornell observes: “the fact that over half of this particular collection of traditions [Tirmidhī’s Sunan] covered such non-juridical subjects as theology, asceticism, accounts of the lives of companions of the Prophet, and Qu’ān commentary meant that it was admirably suited to be employed by early religious reformers as a symbolic statement of protest against the preoccupation of conservative Andalusian legrists with furū‘ (branches of jurisprudence and precedent based only on the doctrines of the Mālikī school of law) as
While away in the Mashriq on pilgrimage, Abū al-Ṣabr further buttressed his ḥadīth portfolio by studying under ‘Alī ibn ‘Ammār153 (d. ca. 575/1179), Abū Ḥafṣ al-Mayānashī154 (d. 583/1187), Abū al-Ṭāhir ibn ‘Awf155 (d. 1185), and Abū al-Fadl al-Ghaznawī156 (d. 599/1202). Abū al-Ṣabr al-Fihri reportedly authored a barnāmaj listing his many teachers. Although this document appears to be lost, it was still being circulated during the time of the Maghribī scholar al-Mintūrī (d. ca. 1430).157 Among Abū al-Ṣabr’s biographers, Ibn al-Qāḍī (d. 1616) also seems to have had access to at least parts of the text.158

opposed to usūl (Qur’ānic and more broadly based ḥadīth sources for theology and jurisprudence).” Cornell, Way, p. 7.


156 Abū al-Fadl Muḥammad Ibn Yūsuf ibn ‘Alī al-Ghaznawī. Born in 522/1128 in Baghdad, Ghaznawī was a traditionist and Ḥanafī legist. He had been a student of Abū al-Ṭāhir al-Silafī and was later a teacher of the famous Cairo based muhaddith Rashīd al-Dīn al-‘Attār, more on whom later. Mundhirī, Takmilah, vol. 1, pp. 448-9, nr. 713. Qurashī, Jawāhir, vol. 3, pp. 410-2, nr. 1588.


158 See the reference to the Fihrasah in Fihrī’s notice in Ibn al-Qāḍī’s Jadhwhah. Note also that Ibn al-Qāḍī mentions the names of certain teachers of Fihrī in the Mashriq that are not mentioned by any of his other biographers (including Dhahabī).
In the domain of *taṣawwuf*, Fihrī was equally as well connected as he was in the domain of traditional religious sciences. To begin with, Fihrī was one of the foremost disciples of Ibn Ghālib al-Anṣārī\(^{159}\) (d. 568/1172 or 573/1177-8), a somewhat overlooked figure who played an important role in the transmission of the legacies of his masters Ibn Barrajān\(^{160}\) (d. 536/1141) and Ibn al-‘Arīf\(^{161}\) (d. 536/1141). The latter figure in particular is an important representative of the Ghazālī-inspired, Andalusian uṣūlī-Sufi movement of the late Almoravid period. And Fihrī,

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\(^{159}\) Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Khalaf ibn Ghālib ibn Mas‘ūd al-Anṣārī (in *Tashawwuf* = al-Qurashī) al-Shilbī (in reference to the town of Silves in the south of Portugal), also known as “Ibn Ghālib” and “al-‘Arīf”. Born in 484/1091. Besides Ibn Barrajān and Ibn al-‘Arīf, his other teachers in the religious sciences include Ahmad al-Bijlawi (d. 542/1147), Abū Marwān Ibn Masarrah (d. 552/1157), and Ibn Bashkawāl. Ibn Ghālib also studied mathematics under one Abū al-‘Abbās ibn ‘Uthmān (or ibn ‘Umar) al-Shilbī. Ibn Ghālib spent a part of his career in Fez where he was one of the principal transmitters of Tirmīdhī’s *Sunan*. One of the most notable attendees of Ibn Ghālib’s ḥadīth-hearing sessions in Fez was Abū Madyan. Another important student of Ibn Ghālib in Fez was Abū al-Ḥasan Ibn Mu‘min, the aforementioned pupil of the theologians Salāljī and Ibn al-Kattānī. Ibn Ghālib has long been regarded as the patron saint of al-Qaṣr al-Kabīr. His shrine there has been maintained over the centuries though lately appears to have fallen into a dilapidated state. Tādilī, *Tashawwuf*, pp. 228-9, nr. 81. Ibn al-Zubayr, *Ṣilat*, pp. 270-1, nr. 650. Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik, *Dhayl*, vol. 3, pp. 174-7, nr. 415. Ibn Abbār, *Takmilah*, vol. 3, p. 411, nr. 2859. Ibn al-Qāḍī, *Jadhwat*, p. 468, nr. 512, and p. 531 in the notice of Abū Madyan. Addas, *Soufre*, p. 76. On his role in transmitting the legacy of Ibn Barrajān and Ibn al-‘Arīf, see especially Fāsī, *Minah*, vol. 2, pp. 121, 123.


as previously noted, also had ties to Ibn al-‘Arīf through other teachers such as the traditionists al-Andarshī and Ibn Qurqūl.

Ibn Ghālib was one of the more mystically-inclined students of Ibn al-‘Arīf and was widely regarded as a sage in his own right, hence his epithet “the gnostic” (al-‘ārif). The works attributed to Ibn Ghālib, although now apparently lost, were reportedly well known in their time. They include Kitāb al-yaqīn (The Book of Certainty), Kitāb al-ayyām wa-al-ḥujab, and Kitāb al-i’tibār (The Book of Crossing-over). The latter title in particular seems to dovetail with what has been termed the tradition of Andalusī mu’tabirūn as represented most prominently by Ibn Barrajān.

Ibn Ghālib’s Kitāb al-i’tibār was also taught to Ibn ‘Arabī by the Ifrīqiyan Sufi ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Mahdawī, more on whom later.

Ibn Ghālib eventually settled in the fortress town of Qaṣr Kutāmah, which was where Fihrī paid him numerous and often extended visits. It was also in this city that another important disciple of Ibn Ghālib settled: the Sufi theologian ‘Abd al-Jalīl ibn Mūsá al-Qaṣrī (d.

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162 Ibn Ghālib is considered by some to be one of the awtād. Fihrī said of him: “he was one of those whom, when beheld, [prompt] the remembrance of God” (kāna min al-lathīna idhā ru’iyū dhukira Allāh). One of Ibn Ghālib’s reported karāmāt is that, upon the death of his father, he donated the full amount of his inheritance (twelve thousand dinars) to the poor, a move which puzzled even his master Ibn al-‘Arīf who asked him: “O Abū al-Ḥasan, couldn’t it [i.e. the sum] have been purified by [donating] a third of it?” (hallā ṭahharathu al-thuluth).


164 Ibn Ṣawwāḥ, Sabk, p. 92.

165 Also formerly known as Alcazquivir and today known as al-Qaṣr al-Kabīr (El Ksar El Kebir), Qaṣr Kutāmah lies in northwestern Morocco some ninety kilometers south of Tangier. During Ibn Ghālib’s time, this fortress town was home to a significant population of refugees from Andalusia. Many of these Andalusians were disciples (murīdīn) of Ibn ‘Arīf who had fled persecution in Almeria. Sabtah was another city in which these refugees settled in large numbers. Ferhat, Sabta, pp. 144-5.

166 Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Jalīl ibn Mūsá ibn ‘Abd al-Jalīl al-Anṣārī al-Awsī, also known as “al-Qaṣrī” for having settled in Qaṣr Kutāmah. Qaṣrī studied in Fez under Ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh al-Ḥijārī and Abū al-Ḥasan “Ibn Ḥunayn” al-Kinānī (d. 569/1173-4), who taught al-Muwatta’ and who in his youth was a
608/1211-2), author of a quite well-known treatise titled *Shuʿab al-īmān* that blends Ashʿarī theology with themes of classical Sufism.167 Qaṣrī is also the author of a Qurʾān commentary, one of very few to have appeared during the Almohad era.168


167 His *Shuʿab al-īmān* (published Bayrūt, 1995; and Cairo, 1996) may technically be classified as a treatise on *kalām* but the predominant authorial objective is to convey spiritual council. Qaṣrī taught this work directly to Ibn ʿArabī. Qaṣrī’s work is cited in Sakhāwī *al-Qawl al-munbīʾ an tarjamat Ibn ʿArabī* (p. 528) as a product of “orthodox”, sunnī Sufism alongside such well known classics Muḥasibī’s *Riʿayah*, Makkī’s *Qūt al-qulūb*, Qushayrī’s *Risālah*, and Suhrawardī’s *ʿAwārif*. In contrast, Sakhāwī sees Ibn ʿArabī and his school as a condemnable aberration from orthodox Sufism. At the same time, its also worth noting that one of the doctrines articulated by Qaṣrī in his *Shuʿab*—namely his definition of the ṛūḥ as a simple, luminous essence (*jawharun basīṭ nūrīy*), which is apparently in line with Ghazālī’s assertions in his *Kitāb al-nafkh wa-al-taswiyah fī al-ruḥ al-kullī*—is invalidated and deemed too “philosophical” a conception by Badīsī in his famous *al-Maqṣad al-sharīf* (pp. 32-4).

168 Qaṣrī’s *tafsīr* is in sixty volumes, corresponding to the sixty sections (*ḥizb, ahzāb*) of the Qurʾān. The *tafsīr* reportedly focuses on the subtle scriptural allusions (*al-tafsīr bi-al-ishaʿah*) as well as on the metaphysical significance of letters (*sirr al-ḥurūf*). A manuscript copy of the work is conserved at al-Khızānah al-Malākīyah (Rabat), nr. 1902. Cited in Ashqar, *al-Tafsīr wa-al-mufassirūn bi-al-Maghrib al-Aṣqā*, p. 66. Other works attributed to Qaṣrī include a commentary on the Divine Names and his *Tanbīh al-afḥām fī mushkil ḥadīth al-Nabīy ʿalyhi al-salām*.

169 Connecting Fihrī even more directly with Ibn al-ʿArīf are the aforementioned figures of Andarshī and Ibn Qurqūl. However, their main interests were in the subjects of *ḥadīth* and *uṣūl*, and less in *tasawwuf* proper.
under Fihri in Sabtah. Ibn ‘Arabi would also study in Qaṣr Kutāmah under ‘Abd al-Jalīl al-Qaṣrī, Ibn Ghālib’s other main disciple. Fihri therefore represents an important piece of the puzzle that is Ḥarrālī’s intellectual and spiritual filiation. Ḥarrālī’s discipleship under this figure is a strong indicator that he was influenced by the Andalusī Sufi tradition, particularly by the “Almerian” school or what has been termed the mu’tabirūn. Thus, notwithstanding Ḥarrālī’s customary silence on his sources, future efforts to analyze his corpus in depth are liable to discover doctrinal parallels with the writings of Ibn Barrajān and Ibn al-‘Arīf.

Fihri’s association with important figures of early Maghirbī Sufism does not end there. In Sabtah, for example, Fihri studied hadīth under Ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh al-Ḥijarī (d. 591/1195), a traditionist and legist who was also widely recognized for his asceticism and sanctity. During his travels through Muslim Spain, Fihri associated with Ibn al-Mujāhid al-Zāhid (d. 574/1179),

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170 Fihri is explicitly cited in the Futūḥāt as a ḥadīth transmitter. According to Addas, Fihri may have played a big role in the early intellectual and spiritual evolution of Ibn ‘Arabī. For example, Ibn ‘Arīf’s Mahāsin al-majālis exerted a major influence on Ibn ‘Arabī, and Fihri certainly has the requisite intellectual “silsilah” to have been a transmitter of this work to al-shaykh al-akbar. Ibn ‘Arabī, Futūḥāt, vol. 6, p. 60. Addas, Soufre, pp. 76, 363-4.


172 Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh Ibn al-Mujāhid al-Ansārī. Born around 483/1090. A native of Seville. The laqab al-Mujāhid is his father was an avid participant in various military campaigns. He should not to be confused with Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn Mūsā Ibn Muḥāhid (d. 324/936), the Qur’ān reader of Baghdad. The laqab al-Zāhid is due Abū ‘Abd Allāh’s reputation for socially-conscious virtue (ṣalāḥ), scrupulousness and ethical purity (wara’), as well as certain miraculous
also a figure of saintly repute. Even more important is Fihri’s affiliation, during a period in Fez, with Abū Ya’zā\(^{173}\) (d. 572/1177) and Abū Madyan\(^{174}\) (d. 594/1198), who together are regarded as the twin poles of 12th century Maghribī Sufism. In Tādilī’s *Tashawwuf*, Fihri is portrayed merely as the humble disciple of Abū Ya’zā. In fact, the latter’s renown arguably owes a lot to Fihri: in his famous hagiographical monograph on Abū Ya’zā (*Di’āmat al-yaqīn*), al-‘Azafī draws extensively on Fihri’s testimony.\(^{175}\)

\(^{173}\) Abū Ya’zā Yalannūr ibn Maymūm al-Dukkālī. Known in the vernacular as “Sīdī Bū ‘Azzah”, this figure was a dark-skinned, apparently illiterate, and monolingual Maṣmūda Berber saint who occupies a monumental position in 12th century Maghribī Sufism. As a disciple of Abū Shu’ayb al-Ṣanhājī (d. 561/1166) of Azammūr, Abū Ya’zā followed the Moroccan Nūrīyah tradition, which traces back to Aḥmad ibn Muhammad al-Nūrū al-Khurāsānī (d. 295/907-8), a companion of al-Junayd of Baghdād. Abū Ya’zā also exhibited aspects of the malāmatī tradition. The eclectic type of early Maghribī mysticism that he practiced may have also been influenced by Neoplatonic ideas through either Fāṭimī Ismā‘īlism or even Manicheanism. Despite his illiteracy, this Shaykh was reportedly able to articulate Sufi doctrine in his native Berber tongue, which would then be translated by an interpreter for the benefit of the Arabic speaking scholars from Fez who attended his sessions at his hermitage in the Middle Atlas. In the hagiographical literature, Abū Ya’zā is described as practicing rigorous asceticism, humbly attending to guests, and performing miracles including especially intuiting the dark, inner thoughts of others. He was said to be well over 100 years old at the time of his death. Tamīmī, *Mustafād*, vol. 2, pp. 28-40, nr. 2. Sha’rānī, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-wuṣṭā*, vol. 1, pp. 509-510, nr. 259. Cornell, *Ḥayy*, pp. 156-62; *Way*, p. 22, 24; *Realm*, pp. 67-79. Sanseverino, EI3, “Abū Ya’zā”. Gril, EI3, “Abū Madyan”.

\(^{174}\) Abū Madyan Shu’ayb. Some sources put his death date at 589/1193. Originally from the region of Seville, he spent a part of his career in late Almoravid Fez and another part of it in Bijāyah. Known as “master of the masters of the Maghrib”, his immense legacy is his synthesis of Maghribī/Andalusian spirituality and Eastern taṣawwuf which endures until the present day. See Gril in EI3 “Abū Madyan” with additional references. One source not mentioned in Gril’s article is the notice of Abū Madyan in Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, *Sabk*, pp. 64-76, nr. 2.

\(^{175}\) ‘Azafī, *Di’āmat*, p. 37, 39, 40, 45-6, 61, 63-5. See also the translation into English of an account in *Di’āmat al-yaqīn* related as a direct testimony of Fihri in Cornell, *Realm*, pp. 74-5. Fihri’s role in transmitting the legacy of Abū Ya’zā is also mentioned in Fāsī, *Mināḥ*, vol. 2, p. 126.
As for Abū Madyan, his relationship with Fihrī seems to have been complex. Fihrī reportedly instructed Abū Madyan in Fez at some point, probably in ḥadīth and in particular the *Sunan* of Tirmidhī. At the same time, Fihrī appears to have been Abū Madyan’s junior. It is also clear that Fihrī recognized the immense spiritual stature of Abū Madyan. According to some sources, Fihrī composed a hagiographical monograph of Abū Madyan, much like the one al-ʿAzafī wrote on Abū Yaʿzā, though today this work appears lost.\(^{176}\)

One of the key features of early Maghribī Sufism is that spiritual instruction occurred less through formal lectures and the instilling of metaphysical doctrine and more through behavioral modeling and the practicing of virtues. Ḥarrālī’s apprenticeship under Fihrī likely followed the “watch and learn” pedagogy whereby the novice observes, emulates, and tries to embody the virtues modeled by the master. Fihrī may thus have the first to impress upon Ḥarrālī the importance of the inner spiritual life. At the same time, one of the texts that Fihrī is known to have taught was the *Risālah* of Qushayrī. Therefore, Ḥarrālī’s tutelage under Fihrī may have also involved the study of the aforementioned text.

It is important to point out that in the 12th and even 13th century Muslim West, *taṣawwuf* had not yet taken on the organized, institutional character that it had acquired in the East. Early Andalusī and Maghribī *taṣawwuf* was not based on formal initiation into a community and submission to a single Shaykh. The spiritual quest was rather a more free-form, individual affair, based on companionship (*ṣuḥbah*) with potentially numerous spiritual mentors. Thus, when Ibn Ṭawwāḥ tells us that Fihrī was Ḥarrālī’s first teacher in *taṣawwuf*, this does not mean that Fihrī stood at the head of a *tariqah* and that Ḥarrālī committed himself to Fihrī as a lifelong Shaykh.

\(^{176}\) Possibly extracted from this lost work are the lines of poetry that appear in Ibn Maryam, *Bustān*, p. 108.
Following the example of Fihrī himself, and more famously of Ibn ‘Arabī, Ḥarrālī would go on to associate with a number of different spiritual mentors during his lifetime.

Fihrī operated in an environment in which it was no uncommon for saints to perform karāmāt, miraculous feats. Fihrī famously reported on the karāmāt of the saintly figure of Abū Ya‘zā. As well, during the sessions of his master Ibn Ghālib, he apparently rubbed shoulders with mysterious attendees whose faces had been singed as a result of having travelled to the gathering at supersonic speed:

When I attended the sessions of [Ibn Ghālib], there were also in attendance “air walkers” (al-mushshāh fī al-hawā’) among whom there was one [particular] man whose face evinced the effect of being burned by fire (arthar ḥaq al-nār) due to barreling through the air (ikhtirāq al-hawā’).

For his part, Fihrī was decidedly more down to earth, and no miraculous feats are attributed to him. The image of Abū al-Ṣabr that emerges from the biographical literature is that of a ṣāliḥ, a label that evokes the righteous forebears (al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ) who succeeded the Prophet as exemplars of the Muslim community. As Cornell notes in his analysis of the Moroccan hagiographical tradition, the notion of ṣalāḥ also suggests social virtue and ethical purity. It also suggests a propensity for keeping metaphysical doctrine (‘ilm) and praxis (‘amal) in balance within one’s own outlook, and in a wider sense, the ability to harmonize the esoteric and exoteric poles of the Islamic tradition. As his variegated pedigree clearly shows, Fihrī moved seamlessly between the worlds of taṣawwuf and religious scholarship.

On the whole, Fihrī was disengaged from political affairs. His activities as lecturer in Sabtah and elsewhere were always informal affairs, as he never accepted any official appointment. But

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177 Addas, Soufre, p. 91.

178 Ṣādīlī, Tashawwuf, p. 228. The author of the Tashawwuf is unsure as to which of the two students of Ibn Ghālib had related the anecdote: Abū al-Ṣabr al-Fihrī or ‘Abd al-Jalīl al-Qaṣrī.

179 Cornell, Realm, pp. 277-8.
neither was Fihri openly hostile towards political power, unlike other mystics of this period who were of a more activist disposition, like Abū al-‘Abbās al-Sabī. On the contrary, Fihri seems to have supported Almohad state policy given that he participated, despite his advanced age, in al-Nāṣir’s doomed military campaign against the Christians in Spain. In the summer of 609/1212, Fihri died a martyr at the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa, a fact that definitively cemented his stature in hagiographic lore.

Abū Dharr al-Khushanī (535-604/1141-1208)181

A native of the Andalusian city of Jaén, Khushanī was one of the preeminent philologists and belletrists of the Islamic West in the late 12th century. He studied initially with his father, Abū Bakr Muḥammad al-Khushanī (d. 544/1149), a prominent linguist and grammarian in his own right. His other teachers in Andalusia include Ibn Bashkawāl (d. 578/1183) under whom he studied ḥadīth, and Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Numayrī (d. 544/1149-50) under whom he studied

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180 Known as al-‘Iqāb in Muslim sources, the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa was a decisive turning point in the struggle between Islam and Christendom over Iberia. Eighteen years after al-Manṣūr’s famous victory at the battle of Alarcos (al-Arak) in July 1194 (Sha’bān 591), a Christian army led by Alfonso VIII of Castile inflicted a crippling defeat upon the forces of Muḥammad al-Nāṣir, al-Manṣūr’s successor. The defeat marked the beginning of a long period of Almohad decline. Hussain Monés, EI2, “al-‘Iqāb”.


182 Some lines of poetry sung by Khushanī in praise of his hometown of Jaén are recorded in al-Ḥimyarī’s Arabic geography al-Rawḍ al-mi’tār, vol. 1, p. 184. Another sample of Khushanī poetry can be found in Tujibī, Zād al-musāfīr, p. 98.


184 Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Saqālah al-Numayrī. Born in the year 500/1106-7, al-Numayrī was a hadīth and uṣūl specialist from Granada and a
Ghazālī’s *Iḥyā*’. During his career, Khushānī traveled widely around Andalusia and the Maghrib.

In Tilimsān, he attended sessions of *adab* and *qirāʿāt* led by ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn ‘Umar al-Ḥaḍramī (d. after 550/1155). In Bijāyah, Khushānī studied the text of *al-Aḥkām al-ṣughrá* with its author Ibn Kharrāṭ (d. 1185). Although theology was never Khushānī’s main specialty, he was for a time the student of Ibn al-Rammāmah in Fez.

Khushānī held administrative posts in cities like Seville, where he assumed the duties of *khuṭbah* at the city’s main mosque, and in Jaén where, starting in the year 590/1194, he served as judge. An altercation with the governor of Jaén ended with Khushānī resigning. He then settled in Fez where he lived out his days teaching ḥadīth, Arabic and the belles-lettres to a great number of students. Khushānī’s courses were based on works like *Kitāb Sībawayh*, Abū ‘Alī al-Fārisī’s (d. 987) *al-Īḍāḥ*, al-Khalīl al-Farāhīdi’s (d. ca. 785) *al-Jumal*, al-Mubarrad’s (d. 900) *al-Kāmil*, Abī ‘Ubayd ibn Sallām’s (d. 838) *al-Amthāl*. Of the titles attributed to Khushānī, many are commentaries on the above works. Though the vast majority of Khushānī’s works are now lost, his corpus was still being actively transmitted down to the time of al-Mintawrī (d. 1431).

The only extant work of Khushānī’s is his *Sharḥ al-sīrah al-nabawīyah*, a commentary on Ibn Hishām’s biography of the Prophet.

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186 For a more detailed discussion of Ibn al-Kharrāṭ see chapter six.


188 There are at least three published editions of this: the original 1911 edition is edited by Paul Brönnle and is the first column of a series titled *Monuments of Arabic Philology*. It is based on manuscripts from
It was likely during Khushanī’s final sojourn in Fez that he taught Ḥarrālī. Other students of Khushanī’s include Ibn Fartūn\(^{189}\) (d. 660/1262), one of the main transmitters of *Sharḥ al-sīrah*; Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shārrī, the aforementioned student of Ibn al-Kattānī; ʿAḥmad al-ʿAẓafī (d. 633/1236), author of *Diʾāmat al-yaqīn* (the hagiographic monograph on Abū Yaʿzā); the Andalusian traditionist Abū Sulaymān Ibn Ḥawṭ Allāh\(^{190}\) (552-621/1157-1224); and the philologist Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Ṣadafī\(^{191}\). Another notable student of Khushanī, though from much earlier in his career, is Ibn ʿArabī. The latter attended Khushanī’s courses on *adab* in Seville. In his *Muḥḍarat al-abrār*, Ibn ʿArabī refers to Khushanī as *sayyīdī*.\(^{192}\)

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\(^{191}\) I have not been able to locate a dedicated biographical notice for this figure who is mentioned in Khushanī’s notice in Ibn Zubayr’s *Ṣilat al-ṣilah*. It is worth noting that, in the *Ṣilah*, Ṣadafī provides some interesting testimony on Khushanī’s pedagogical style. Khushanī was apparently averse to responding to students’ questions after delivering his lectures on Sibawayh’s *al-Kitāb fī al-naḥw*. Therefore, when it came to issues related to *nahw*, and despite Khushanī’s famous erudition on the subject, some of his students would turn instead to the philologist Ibn Kharūf (another teacher of Ḥarrālī discussed below) who was just as knowledgeable as Khushanī but was much more open to post-lecture questions from students, at least according to Ṣadafī. Ṣadafī and his co-pupils still relied on Khushanī for matters relating to *ādāb, lughāt*, and *taqyīd al-riwāyāt*, since Khushanī’s knowledge of these matters was considered peerless.

\(^{192}\) Addas, Soufre, p. 369, in index IV titled *Les hommes de lettres fréquentés par Ibn ʿArabī en Occident musulman*. 

79
Ibn Kharūf (525-609/1131-1212)\(^{193}\)

Because of similarities in their names, there is a common confusion between this figure—a native of Seville who is sometimes called Ibn Kharūf al-naḥwī—and his contemporary homonym Ibn Kharūf al-ḥadīth\(^{194}\) (d. 620/1223), a native of Cordoba who died in the Mashriq. Ibn Kharūf al-naḥwī studied ḥadīth and fiqh under Ibn al-Rammāmah (probably in Fez in the 1150s or 1160s). He also studied these subjects with Ibn Mujāhid (d. 574/1179), Ibn Bashkawāl (d. 578/1183), ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad Ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh (d. 591/1195). Ibn Kharūf studied kalām and uṣūl al-fiqh under Abū al-Walīd Ibn Rushd (d. 595/1198) and Rukn al-Dīn al-Ru’aynī\(^{195}\) (d. 598/1201-2). In Arabic, Ibn Kharūf was also one of the closest students of Abū Bakr Ibn Ṭāhir al-Khidabb\(^{196}\) (d. 580/1184-5) who is hailed as the undisputed Maghribī master.

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\(^{195}\) Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad al-Ru’aynī al-Saraqṣūṯī, Rukn al-Dīn. Earned his laqab in the Mashriq where he engaged in debates with other grammarians over Kitāb Sibawayh. Ru’aynī spent a part of his career in Malaga where instructed a cohort of students. During the final phase of his career, Ru’aynī served as judge at Ma’dīn ‘Uwām, a mining town near the modern day city of Khanīfrah, which is where Ibn Kharūf appears to have studied with him. Ibn Abbār, Takmilah, vol. 2, p. 256, nr. 1538. Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik, Dhayl, vol. 4, p. 397. Ibn al-Zubayr, Ṣilāṭ, p. 9, nr. 11. Bakhtī, Salājī, 212-4.

\(^{196}\) Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ṭāhir al-Anṣārī al-Ishbīlī, “al-Khidabb”. A grammarian from Seville, highly esteemed for his erudition but also known for holding his students to impossibly high standards. His notoriously irascible and disputatious character seems to have rubbed off on some of his students, namely Ibn Kharūf and Abū Dharr al-Khushaṭī. After a long sojourn in the Mashriq, where he engaged in debates with other grammarians over Kitāb Sibawayh, Ibn Ṭāhir died in Bijāyah while
of grammar in his time. Ibn Ṭāhir was a great authority on Kitāb Sibawayh, which he had previously studied under Abū al-Qāsim Ibn al-Rammāk (d. 541/1146-7). Ibn Kharūf’s other Arabic teachers include Abū Isḥāq Ibn Mulkūn197 (d. ca. 582/1186) and Abū Muḥammad Ibn Daḥmān198 (d. 575/1180).

Ibn Kharūf authored a widely praised commentary on Sībawayh called Tanqīḥ al-albāb fī sharḥ ghawāmiḍ al-Kitāb.199 After he presented a four-volume copy of this work in his own handwriting to al-Nāṣir, Ibn Kharūf was rewarded with four thousand dirhams. Emboldened by the Almohad Caliph’s largesse, Ibn Kharūf wrote out several more copies of the Tanqīḥ and presented them to other potential patrons. In the 14th century, travelers returning from the Mashriq informed the biographer Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik al-Marrākushī that they had seen a copy of the work in Cairo’s al-Madrasah al-Fāḍilīyah.200 Ibn Kharūf also has a commentary on al-Zajjājī’s al-Jumal201 and a work on farāʿīd.


198 One of the aforementioned teachers of Fihrī.

199 Published Tripoli, 1995.


201 Published Makkah, 1998/9 and Jiddah, 2006/7.
Other than Ibn Kharūf’s name being mentioned in some of Ḥarrālī’s notices as a teacher, nothing is known of their encounter. Their relationship most likely began in Fez and was centered on grammar. Ibn Kharūf’s other students include Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shārī, the aforementioned founder of the Maghrib’s earliest *madrasah* in Sabtah; Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ru’aynī\(^{202}\) (d. 666/1268), author of a *Barnāmaj*; Ibn al-Qaṭṭān, one of Ḥarrālī’s teachers to be discussed below; Ibn ‘Arabī also claims to have studied under Ibn Kharūf, although it is possible that he is referring to Ibn Kharūf the poet.\(^{203}\)

Ibn Kharūf was known for his quarrelsome and cantankerous character. He penned refutations against a variety of figures in all manner of subjects. For example, against the work of Ibn Maḍā’ *Tanzīh al-Qur’ān ‘an mā lā yalīq bi-al-bayān*, Ibn Kharūf wrote a refutation titled *Tanzīh a’limmat al-naḥw ‘an mā nusiba ilayhim min al-khaṭa’ wa-al-sahw*. In Arabic, he also wrote refutations of his own teachers Abū Bakr ibn Ṭāhir and Ibn Mulkūn. It is also reported that, while under the tutelage of Ibn Ṭāhir, his primary mentor in philology, Ibn Kharūf had once spoken ill of some of his master’s works. Because Ibn Ṭāhir was well connected politically, Ibn Kharūf’s temerity landed him in prison. Eventually, after he was released, he reconciled with his teacher.

Ibn Kharūf also critiqued the ideas of theologians, taking aim at Juwaynī’s *al-Irshād* as well as the works of other stalwarts of *kalām* like Ibn Ḥazm and Ibn Rushd. While in Fez, he

\(^{202}\) Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Ali ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Ru’aynī, “Ibn al-Fakhirhār”. A traditionist and Mālikī legist from Seville. See the introduction to his *Barnāmaj* (ed. Shabbūḥ, Damascus, 1962). See also the extended notice which includes samples of his correspondences and poetry in Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik, *Dhayl*, vol. 3, pp. 272-309, nr. 636. This figure should not to be confused with the Andalusian traditionist Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muhammad ibn Ibrāhīm Ibn al-Fakhirhār (d. 590/1194), who was his teacher and will be mentioned below.

\(^{203}\) See Addas, *Soufre*, index IV, p. 369.
reportedly engaged in oral disputes with the theologian Ibn al-Kattānī. But while Ibn Kharūf’s knowledge of Arabic was fairly well respected, most in the scholarly community believed theology to be beyond his ken and his contentious forays in the field went largely ignored.204

A lifelong celibate, Ibn Kharūf was bound by no family commitments.205 He travelled regularly between the cities of Ronda, Seville, Ceuta, Fez, and Marrakesh, making his living partly by selling carved wood wares, and splitting his time between teaching and commerce. The amount of time he spent teaching in any given city allegedly depended on how fast he could sell his stock. Additionally, Ibn Kharūf’s students report that he charged a strict fee for his teaching services. The fact that this is mentioned suggests that it was not a common practice, or that at least such fees were negotiable. Towards the end of his life, Ibn Kharūf reportedly suffered from dementia. Witnesses describe him wandering the streets of Seville in an indecent state.

**Ibn al-Qaṭṭān (562-628/1167-1231)**206

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204 Even in the field of Arabic, one of Ibn Kharūf’s students describes his thinking as somewhat sterile, unable to absorb new knowledge beyond what he had learned under Abū al-Ţāhir, and quick to reject what he doesn’t know. It is also alleged that Ibn Kharūf exhibited great displeasure during the question and answer sessions, which directly contradicts the testimony of Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Ṣadafī (cited in the previous section on Khushanī).

205 Ibn Kharūf’s rationale for having never married and having shunned the pleasures of the flesh—primarily because, in his view, wives are a drain on a husband’s finances and on time that is better spent on study—can be found in his biographical notice in Udfuwī, *Badr*, vol. 2, p. 620.

Ibn al-Qaṭṭān was a prominent man of letters who served at the pleasure of a succession of Almohad caliphs, starting with al-Manṣūr (r. 580-95/1184-99) through to Yahyā al-Mu‘tāsim (r. 624-33/1226-36). Ibn al-Qaṭṭān’s early education began in his native Fez where he studied under traditionists such as Abū ‘Abd Allāh Ibn al-Fakhkhār207 (d. 590/1194), Ibn al-Naqirāt208 (d. after 595/1198), Abū ‘Abd Allāh Ibn al-Baqqār209, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Tujībī210 (d. 610/1213), and

207 Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Khalaf ibn Ḥamad al-Anṣārī, “Ibn al-Fakhkhār”. Born in Malaga in 511/1117, Ibn al-Fakhkhār was a traditionist and longtime student of Abū Bakr Ibn al-'Arabī and other eminent authorities of hadīth. Ibn al-Fakhkhār once confided to a student that the two works which were as dear to him as a sūrah of the Qur’ān were Ibn Rushd’s al-Muqaddimāt (a collection of juristic reflections on the Mudawwanaḥ), and Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr al-Numayrī’s (d. 463/1070) al-Taqaṣṣī (examines the traditions cited in the Muwatta’). In 580/1184-5, Ibn Fakhkhār was honorably summoned by al-Manṣūr to the Almohad capital, where he would live out his days. Ibn ‘Askar, A’lām, pp. 111-6, nr. 15. Mundhirī, Takmilah, vol. 1, pp. 209-10, nr. 242. Ibn Abbār, Takmilah, vol. 2, pp. 240-1, nr. 1506. Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik, Dhayl, vol. 4, pp. 95-8, nr. 218.

208 Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Mūsá al-Anṣārī al-Sālimī, “Ibn al-Naqirāt”. Born in Jaen in 515/1121, Ibn al-Naqirāt was a student of Ibn al-Rammāmah and Ibn Qurqūl, among others. He taught and gave sermons at the Qarawīyīn in Fez. A work of alchemy (or chemistry) titled Shudhūr al-dhahab is attributed to him, though the Dhayl and the Takmilah give no other indication that he was involved in either field. However, in Ibn ‘Arabī’s Rūḥ al-quds (trans. Austin), we find a mention of the figure ‘Alī ibn Mūsá ibn al-Naqarat (sic), on whom Ibn ‘Arabī has this to say: “Although unknown by the brethren, he was secretly a member of the order, his gnosis being complete and his insight (firāsah) considerable. He had little to do with others of the order till he died. He was well known for his recitations of the Qur’ān and his readings of poetry.” See Ibn ‘Arabī, Sufis, pp. 135-6, nr. 37. Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik, Dhayl, vol. 3, pp. 347-8, nr. 698. Ibn Abbār, Takmilah, vol. 3, p. 375, nr. 2787.


210 Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Rahmān ibn ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān al-Tujībī. Born ca. 540/1145. A well-travelled Andalusian traditionist whose extensive list of hadīth teachers is given in the Dhayl. It includes Andalusians such as ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Ishbīlī, Ibn Maḍā’, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Ibn al-Fakhkhār, Abū Zayd al-Suhaylī, and Ibn al-Naqirāt. It also includes many well-known traditionists from the Mashriq under whom Tujībī studied during his sojourn there. A highly sought after master of hadīth upon his return to the Maghrib in 574/1178-9, he lectured in Ceuta, Fez, Marrakesh, and finally in Tilimsān. Attributed to him are several titles in the “spiritual council” genre (al-mawā’iz wa-al-raqā’iq). For example, al-Faqr wa-fadlīh (Poverty and its Merits), Fadl al-ṣalāh ‘alā al-nabi (The Merits of Invoking Prayer on the Prophet), and Arba’ūn ḥadīthan fī al-ḥubb fī Allāh (Forty hadīth on the Love of
Abū al-Ṣabr al-Fihrī; under grammarians like Aḥmad Ibn Maḍā’, and Ibn Kharūf (al-nahwī, most probably); and under theologians like Ibn al-Kattānī and Abū al-Ḥasan Ibn Mu’min. An extensive list of teachers and professional correspondents is given in the *Dhayl*.

Ibn al-Qaṭṭān distinguished himself first and foremost as an Almohad courtier who quickly rose to the powerful position as head of the ṭalabat al-ḥadar.211 This elite institution was composed of circles of scholars recruited by the Sultan and granted rank, stipends, and other privileges in exchange for upholding the Almohad order and lending legitimacy to the regime.212 The ṭalabah acted as advisors to the caliph and formed a retinue around him, enriching his daily routine with rituals like the recital of prayers, and reading from the Qurʾān, ḥadīth, and the compositions of the Mahdī. The ṭalabah were also propagandists, dialecticians, and well versed in the theoretical sciences, able to engage in formal disquisitions (munāẓarāt) on a variety of

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211 As with many aspects of Almohad institutional history, the nature and function of the ṭalabah corps is not wholly clear. In his *Dhayl*, Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik al-Marrākusḥī calls Ibn al-Qaṭṭān raʾis al-ṭalabah. As Fricaud observes, the term raʾīs may be an act of “de-almohadization” on the part of Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik. According to earlier Almohad sources, the highest authority in the ṭalabat al-ḥadar would have been called shaykh ṭalabat al-ḥadar or mizwār al-ṭalabah. The latter expression, in particular, is a typically Almohad technical term, whereas the term raʾīs is not. Similarly, when Ibn Abbār says of Ibn al-Qaṭṭān raʾasa ṭalabat al-ʿilm bi-Marrākush, it is instructive to remember that, at the time, the author of the *Takmilah* was a Ḥafṣid official and presumably familiar with old Almohad terminology. His choice not to use the term mizwār may have been for the benefit of non-Almohad readers. Strangely, however, the Bijāyan biographer Ghubrīnī, writing a half century later and in the same region as Ibn Abbār, refers to Ibn al-Qaṭṭān as mizwār al-ṭalabah bi-al-Maghrib. See Fricaud, *Notice*, p. 237 and *Place des ṭalaba*, 533-44. Ghubrīnī, ‘*Unwān*, p. 43. On the ṭalabah corps in general see Hopkins, *Medieval*, pp. 104-5, 108. Ferhat, *Sabtah*, pp. 171-3.

212 Contrary to what term ṭālib might suggest, the members of this institution were not young apprentices, but rather prominent savants and high functionaries. For example, the grammarian and philosopher Ibn Maḍā’ was a member of the ṭalabah as early as 1147. The mystic Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Sabtī (d. 601/1204) of Marrakesh was also for a time among their ranks. Members of the ṭalabah corps were not bound by ethnic or tribal links but came from far and wide and were recruited based on merit. The term ḥadar here signifies “city” or “capital city”. This means that the ṭalabah usually carried out their functions in urban centers, not that they originally all hailed from such environments.
subjects, both religious, like hadīth and fiqh and also technical, like weights and measures and book binding.

Ibn al-Qaṭṭān wrote treatises of varying length on these and many other subjects. For example in fiqh Ibn al-Qaṭṭān wrote a refutation of Ibn Ḥazm’s Kitāb al-Muḥallā, a work in which the philosopher had articulated his Zāhirī view of religious law. As an adherent of the Mālikī school, Ibn al-Qaṭṭān also opined on the use of qiyās in his Kitāb al-naz‘ fī al-qiyās li-munāḍalat man salaka ghayr al-muhayya‘ fī ithbāt al-qiyās. Other interesting titles attributed to Ibn al-Qaṭṭān cover a wide range of topics, from a work on the comportment of amīrs during negotiations (Kitāb mā yuḥāḍ iru bi-hi al-umarā’), to a work on equine genealogy. One interesting work which unfortunately seems lost is his Dissertation on the manner of engaging an infidel [sovereign] (Maqālah fī mu’āmalat al-kāfir), written for the benefit of al-Ḥāsr (son of al-Manṣūr, r. 595/1199-610/1213) on the occasion of his meeting with Alphonso IX de Léon in Andalusia sometime prior to July 16th 1212 (14 Ṣafar 609), the date when the Muslims were defeated at al-‘Uqāb (Las Navas de Tolosa).213

Most of Ibn al-Qaṭṭān’s works are about fiqh and hadīth, a fact that is reflected in the extant portion of his corpus that has been published. For example, in the area of fiqh he expounded on Mālikī legal reasoning in his al-Iqnā‘ fī masā’il al-ijmā‘.214 He also wrote on the religious aspects of modesty in his al-Nazār fī aḥkām al-nazār bi-ḥāssat al-baṣar.215 In ḥadīth, Ibn Qaṭṭān authored Bayān al-wahm wa-al-īhām al-wāqi‘ayn fī kitāb al-Aḥkām a commentary on the work

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213 See in this regard Ghouirgat’s article « Comment se comporter avec un roi chrétien » : l’ouvrage perdu d’Abū l-Ḥasan Ḥāṣib ibn al-Qaṭṭān et les enjeux du cérémonial almohade.

214 Multiple editions.

of ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Ishbīlī’s (1116-1185) *Aḥkām al-wuṣṭā min ḥadīth al-nabīy*. The Syrian scholar Dhahabī (d. 748/1348) wrote a refutation of Ibn Qaṭṭān’s commentary titled *al-Radd ʻalā Ibn al-Qaṭṭān*, which goes to show that this debate had echoes even outside the Maghrib.

Ibn Qaṭṭān was a controversial figure. A litany of alleged abuses by him is detailed in the *Dhayl*. One of these is his propensity of deprecating other scholars, exposing their faults, and making accusations against them, including those that had once been his teachers. This is the case for example with the aforementioned Abū al-Ḥasan Ibn Mu’min, one of Salāljī’s students, whom Ibn al-Qaṭṭān accused of being a pederast. As the head of the ṭalabah corps, Ibn al-Qaṭṭān was seen by many as a vain and vicious careerist, one who sought to undermine the prospects of the scholars who came to the capital hoping to advance their careers, making sure that none of them ever eclipsed him and that in due course they returned to their homeland.

Ibn al-Qaṭṭān was also known for his open enmity with the aforementioned theologian al-Mukallātī, who also cut an eminent scholarly figure in the Almohad court and one whose distinguished career, like that of Ibn al-Qaṭṭān, spanned a succession of Almohad caliphs. Despite their enmity, al-Mukallātī famously came to Ibn al-Qaṭṭān’s defense when the latter faced charges of *bid‘ah* and *kufr* by a group of unnamed scholars. At the time, Ibn al-Qaṭṭān’s

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216 Published al-Riyāḍ, 2011


218 Ibn al-Qaṭṭān might not have been the sole accuser, but he certainly seems to have been the most vocal. In one of the notices of Ibn Mu’min (Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik, *Dhayl*, vol. 3, pp. 216-222, nr. 525) there is a line quoted from Ibn Qaṭṭān’s (apparently lost) barnāmaj which reads: َkāna [Ibn Mu’min]...yurmá fī dīnih bi-al-mayl ilá al-sabā khāṣṣatan. According the editor, on the margins of one of the *Dhayl*’s manuscripts (in a different handwriting than the body) we find a rebuke: “Ibn al-Qaṭṭān has been made to pay for his calumny (qad sullīta ʻalā Ibn al-Qaṭṭān min thalbihi)”. The comeuppance alluded to here may refer to the famous trials Ibn al-Qaṭṭān suffered towards the end of his life.
star in the Almohad capital was already setting. Apparently seizing upon a particular statement uttered by Ibn al-Qaṭṭān during a sermon, his accusers contended that it amounted to an espousal of the doctrine of “acquiring prophecy” (*iktisāb al-nubuwwah*). When they approached al-Mukallātī, hoping he would concur with their judgement and take this opportunity to destroy his rival’s career—or worse, call for his execution—they were astonished when he instead vouched for Ibn al-Qaṭṭān’s orthodoxy and reproached the accusing scholars for their smear campaign. Mukallātī reportedly told them something to the effect: it might be Ibn Qaṭṭān in your crosshairs today, it could just as easily be me tomorrow.219

Following the death of the caliph al-Mustanṣir (r. 610-20/1213-23, son of al-Nāṣir), Ibn al-Qaṭṭān became embroiled in complicated dynastic power struggles in the Almohad capital. The crisis saw al-Mustanṣir’s successor ‘Abd al-Wāḥid (r. 620-1/1223-4, brother to al-Manṣūr) deposed after only an eight-month rule, hence the appellation ‘Abd al-Wāḥid *al-Makhlū‘*. His rival al-‘Ādil (r. 621-4/1224-6, son of al-Manṣūr) took over the reins of power for a couple years before he too was displaced by al-Ma’mūn (r. 624-30/1226-32, son of al-Manṣūr). It was al-Ma’mūn who formally renounced the old Almohad doctrines, which in turn provoked the rebellion of Yahyā al-Mu’taṣim (r. 624-33/1226-36, son of al-Nāṣir) who reaffirmed his fidelity to the old Tūmartian creed and laid claim to the Almohad throne.

Ibn Qaṭṭān chose to side with al-Mu’taṣim, which meant that when al-Ma’mūn gained control of Marrakesh, with considerable bloodshed, Ibn al-Qaṭṭān was forced to join al-Mu’taṣim and his group of partisans as they retreated from the city in 624/1226. In the process, Ibn al-Qaṭṭān was separated from his family and forfeited all his possessions; his house in Marrakesh

219 This event is recounted in the notice of Mukallātī in Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik, *Dhayl*, vol. 5, pp. 350-3, nr. 229.
was ransacked. Never able to return to the capital, Ibn al-Qaṭṭān eventually settled in Sijilmàssah where he served as qāḍī until his death in 628/1231.

During his heyday, Ibn Qaṭṭān instructed numerous students in Marrakesh and also, apparently, in Andalusia and Ifrīqiyya where he no doubt traveled in some official capacity as an Almohad functionary. However, of the few students that are named in his notice, none seem to have risen to particular prominence. Nor are any singled out as close proteges, perhaps reflecting the fact that mentorship of students never was Ibn al-Qaṭṭān’s highest concern. The only exception, in terms of students who would later rise to prominence, is the figure of Abū Bakr Ibn Muḥriz (d. 655/1257), a traditionist who would go on to have a fêted career in Bijâyah.\footnote{220 Additional information on this figure is supplied in the later chapter on Bijâyah.}

Ḥarrālī’s biographers tell us that his studentship under Ibn al-Qaṭṭān revolved around hadīth, but no indication is provided as to when or where this occurred.\footnote{221 This information is supplied in Ḥarrālī’s notice in Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, Sabk, p. 84.} One possibility is that Ḥarrālī studied hadīth under Ibn al-Qaṭṭān at some early stage of the latter’s career in Fez. Another possibility is that Ḥarrālī was part of the Ibn al-Qaṭṭān-led talabah corps.
CHAPTER FOUR: Ifrīqiyya

This chapter examines Ḥarrālī’s companionship under the Ifrīqiyan spiritual masters Abū Yūsuf al-Dahmānī and Abū Sa‘īd al-Bājī. It’s hard to know the doctrinal specifics of their teachings, since they did not leave behind a written corpus and since their focus was on the spiritual formation of disciples. Both, however, were disciples of Abū Madyan, which makes Ḥarrālī an indirect inheritor of the latter’s more well-known legacy.

At the same time, Ḥarrālī was also disseminating his knowledge of the more technical, traditional religious sciences he had acquired in the Far Maghrib like uṣūl. Ḥarrālī influenced pupils like Ibn Abī al-Dunyā and Ibn Bazīzah who would go on to be influential Ifrīqyan ‘ulamā’.
Abū Yūsuf al-Dahmānī (550-621/1152-1224)222

One of the first figures whom Ḥarrālī meets on his eastward journey is Abū Yūsuf al-Dahmānī. Born in a village called al-Masrūqīn in the environs of Qayrawān, Dahmānī hailed from a Bedouin family—the Banī Riyāḥ clan of the Hilālī tribe—that led a semi-nomadic existence on the steppes of Qayrawān. In his youth, Dahmānī had been a passionate horseman. His hagiographers relate the story of a young Dahmānī who, riding on his favorite mount, had joined a warring party intent on attacking a Christian enclave on the Eastern Tunisian coast near Mahdiyyah. En route, the group passed by a local saintly man—a certain Abū Zakarīya’ ibn al-Ijbārī—who picked out Dahmānī in the crowd and precipitated a major turnabout of his life. From that point on, Dahmānī reportedly gave up his vagabond life and turned to spirituality and the study of the religious sciences. Eventually, Dahmānī would help other Bedouin Arabs integrate into settled Tunisian society.

Dahmānī’s first teachers in the exoteric sciences include the legist Abū Zakarīyā ibn ‘Awwānah and the figure of Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Baskarī whom he designates as his Shaykh al-tarbiyah. Around 570/1175, Dahmānī traveled to Bijāyah to put himself under the discipleship of Abū Madyan, his Shaykh al-ṭarīqah. Dahmānī was part of a close knit group of individuals from Ifrīqiyyā who travelled together to Bijāyah to become disciples of Abū Madyan. Upon their return, they would form an elite network of mystics and become known as “Ifrīqiyyā’s finest”

(akhyār Ifrīqiyya). This group includes ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Mahdawī223 (d. 621/1224), Abū ‘Alī al-Naftī224 (d. ca. 1213), and Abū Sa‘īd al-Bājī, who will be discussed separately below. Members of this group also reportedly attended sessions held by Abū Madyan in a mosque still known today as masjid Abī Madyan in the Sakkākīn neighborhood of Tūnis. Apparently, these sessions took place very early on in Abū Madyan’s career, well before his Bijāyah years and, according to some sources, shortly after he returned from pilgrimage.225


225 According to other sources Abū Madyan never made it to Makkah.
Around 595/1199, Dahmānī left Bijāyah for his native Qayrawān. Shortly thereafter, he traveled by sea from Mahdīyah to Alexandria, eventually making his way to Makkah where he performed the pilgrimage. Over the course of his voyage to the Mashriq, Dahmānī established intimate connections with the Sufi master Abū ‘Abd Allāh-Qurashī (d. 599/1203) as well as with some of the latter’s prime disciples. These include Abū al-‘Abbās al-Qastallānī (d. 636/1239) and his co-disciple Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qurtūbī (d. 631/1233), who later taught *tafsīr* to Ḥarrālī’s in Madīnah. Dahmānī also met Abū al-‘Abbās al-Ḥarrār (aka. al-Ḥarīrī), also a disciple of Qurashī as well as being close friend of Ibn ‘Arabī. Separately, Dahmānī also met with the Cairo-based Sufi metaphysician and *muhaddith* al-Fakhr al-Fārisī, a figure with whom Ḥarrālī will also meet. One of Dahmānī’s disciples who accompanied him to the Mashriq and ended up settling in Jerusalem is the saintly woman known as Sitt al-Mulūk.

On his return to Ifrīqiyyā, Dahmānī settled in Qayrawān where he set about disseminating the teachings of Abū Madyan. Surrounded by numerous disciples, he came to be regarded as part of Ifrīqiyyā’ spiritual elite. According to Dabbāgh, author of a hagiographical monograph (*manāqib*), Dahmānī had been designated some years earlier by Abū Madyan as a future *quṭb*. At some point, Dahmānī taught at the coastal hermitage (*ribāṭ/rābiṭah*) of Ṣaqānis in Mahdīyah. Later, he moved back to the city of Qayrawān where he died a septuagenarian in 621/1224.

Ibn Ṭawwāḥ is the only biographer to mention the meeting of Ḥarrālī with Dahmānī and, unfortunately, he provides no details of the encounter. However, in Ibn al-Dabbāgh’s *al-Asrār*

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226 Famous karāmāt accounts are attributed to Dahmānī, including his levitation during a *samā‘* hosted by Qurashī in Egypt and related by the latter’s disciples.


al-Jalīyah fī al-manāqib al-Dahmānīyah we find at least two instances of Ḥarrālī transmitting hagiographical anecdotes about Dahmānī.229 Although the anecdotes do not directly involve Ḥarrālī, it is probably safe to assume that, at least for a time, Ḥarrālī counted himself among Dahmānī’s companions (aṣḥāb).

The rather indeterminate initiatory manner in which Ḥarrālī attached himself to Dahmānī (and to the figure of Bājī as discussed below) appears to follow the pattern established Abū Madyan. Predicated on the non-binding ties of companionship (ṣuḥbah) rather than initiatory rites and hierarchical power structures, this model of master-disciple relationship was the norm in Maghribī Sufism’s pre-institutional phase. To date, I have not found evidence of Ḥarrālī being formally inducted into taṣawwuf (or inducting others). The period of time which Ḥarrālī spent as a companion of Dahmānī and Bājī appears to be limited, at least relative to other local disciples.230 Ḥarrālī’s case is not unlike that of Ibn ‘Arabī, the other famous spiritual itinerant

229 In the first instance (Dabbāgh, Asrār, p. 139), the editor renders the name of the transmitter as Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn al-Khawlānī, noting that in one manuscript it is given as al-Ḥarrānī (a common misspelling of Ḥarrālī). The reason why the editor (or the original copyist) writes the name as Khawlānī is probably because there is another figure appearing several times in Dabbāgh’s work who goes by the name of Abū Sulaymān Mu’ammad al-Khawlānī. The second instance (Dabbāgh, Asrār, pp. 154-5) is a karāmah story related by Abū al-Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad al-Tajibī al-ṣaḥīf bi al-Ḥidhā (الحذاء). In a footnote, the editor suggests it could be a reference to Ḥarrālī. Further evidence that the figure in question is indeed Ḥarrālī is that, in the chain of transmission of the anecdote in question, he is sandwiched between Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qurṭubī (an important teacher of Ḥarrālī) and Ibn ‘Abd al-Sayyid al-Ṭarabulsī (a known student of Ḥarrālī). Note however that while the editor’s note 7f on p. 154 gives the correct references to Ḥarrālī’s notice in Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s Sabk al-maqāl, the editor also references incorrectly the notice of Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad ibn Abī Bakr al-Tujibī al-Ḥarrār (d. 616/1219) in Nabhānī’s, Jāmi’ Karāmāt al-awliyā’. Ḥarrār (sometimes also called al-Ḥarrīrī) is the famous friend of Ibn ‘Arabī.

230 When we analyze the manāqib works dedicated to both Bājī and Dahmānī, we find that Ḥarrālī’s name is mentioned quite rarely in comparison to other, more prolific transmitters of anecdotes. Most transmitters appear to be local Ifrīqiyans disciples. On the other hand, the hagiographers appear to know very little about Ḥarrālī, that is assuming they even transcribe his name correctly. What this means in my opinion is that Ḥarrālī’s companionship under these Ifrīqyan masters lasted for a period of several months, but probably not several years.
who, a decade or two earlier, had also moved around the greater Maghrib region, imbibing the spiritual and intellectual nectar of numerous Shuyūkh and being reluctant to submit to the authority of any one particular master.

**Abū Sa‘īd al-Bājī (551-628/1156-1231)**

Another figure whom Ḥarrālī mey in Ifrīqiyya is Abū Sa‘īd al-Bājī, a saintly figure (ṣāliḥ) whose memory is arguably better preserved today than that of Dahmānī or even Mahdawī. Born to an upper-middle class family in Bājah, one of the suburbs of Tūnis, Bājī was a tailor by profession prior to becoming famous as a saint. Beginning in 575/1179, Bājī underwent spiritual training in Bijāyah under Abū Madyan (d. 594/1197) as well as under a little-known companion of the latter named Abū Marwān al-Yaḥṣabī al-Būnī (d. after 600/1203). Bājī maintained close relations with the other prominent Sufis of Ifrīqiyya, particularly Mahdawī.

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231 Abū Sa‘īd Khalaf ibn Yaḥyā al-Tamīmī al-Bājī. Bājī’s tomb is still venerated today and lies between Carthage and La Marsa on a hill that bears his name (Ṣūḥ Abū Sa‘īd). With the exception of Hawwārī’s dedicated hagiographical work, Manāqib Abī Sa‘īd al-Bājī (ed. Shitwī, 2004), the primary biographical record of this period is relatively silent on Bājī despite his connection with Abū Madyan and Shādhīlī and the current popularity of his mawsim. Ibn Ġawwār’s Sābk al-maqāl is the only other biographical source to mention Bājī as one of Shādhīlī’s masters (p. 92 in the notice of Shādhīlī). See also Maqdīsh, Nuzhat al-anţār, vol. 1, p. 547. Zarkashī, Tūrikh al-dawlatayn, p. 26. al-Wazīr al-Sarrāj, al-Ḥulal al-sundusīyah, vol. 1, p. 507; vol. 2, pp. 145, 506; vol. 3, pp. 154, 305, 306, 311, 319, 320, 324, 332-337 (most of the references in the Ḥulal are simply cases where the location of Bājī’s tomb is being used as a reference point for the burial place of other personalities). General biographical information on Bājī can also be found in the following more contemporary works: Nayyāl, al-Ḥaqīqah al-tārīkhīyah, pp. 224-6. Ḥubīd, Tūnis wa-awliyā’uhā, passim. Brunschwig, Berbérie, vol. 2, pp. 322-4, 328.

232 No dedicated notice appear to exist for this figure. Scattered references to him offer variants of his nisbah al-Yaḥṣabī. See references for example to al-Yaḥṣabī in Hawwārī, Manāqib al-Bājī, pp. 63-66, 138-139; references to al-Faḥṣalī in Ibn Ṭawwār, Sābk al-maqāl, pp. 62-3 (in the notice of Abū Madyan); a reference to al-Taǧṣīlī in Dabbāhh, Ma‘ālim al-īman, vol. 3, p. 217; and a reference to the grave of al-Faḥṣalī in the city of Būnah in Ḥimyārī, al-Rawd al-mi’ārī, p. 115. This figure is surely not the ḥurūfī Aḥmad al-Būnī (d. 622?).

233 Upon Mahdawī’s death, Bājī reportedly took charge of washing his body. On the relationship between Bājī and Mahdawī, see Ḥubīd, al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, pp. 47-51.
In 603/1206 Bājī performed Ḥajj and passed through the Levant before returning to Tūnis in 606/1209. For years after his return, Bājī led an anonymous, hermit-like life of abnegation in one of the many ancient fortress-covenants (ribāṭ) that dot the littoral of Tunisia. Known only to a small circle of disciples such as Ibn al-Shammā‘ (d. 664/1266)\textsuperscript{234}, he would appear in public only on the occasion of ‘īd prayers. Bājī’s seances were said to be based heavily on the Risālah of Qushayrī (d. 465/1072) and the works of the Ḥanbalī preacher Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200). Eventually, as the number of Bājī’s disciples increased and his renown as a spiritual mentor spread, large crowds of adoring commoners would regularly gather around him when he came into town to pray at the Zaytūnah mosque.

Among his admirers were also prominent religious figures such as the politically well-connected qāḍī of Tūnis\textsuperscript{235} and the imām and khaṭīb of the Zaytūnah mosque.\textsuperscript{236} But Bājī was also known for refusing the patronage of political patrons. This was the case, for example, with Tunis’ pro-Sufi Almohad governor Abū al-ʻAlā’ (r. 1222-3). Like many other Sufi saints in this period, Bājī still applied pressure on the governing elite and advocated on behalf of the local population. Except that, Bājī would not communicate directly with the governor. Rather, he would make his concerns known by uttering audible supplications after public prayers. These would then be conveyed to the governor by his agents.

\textsuperscript{234} Abū l-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf al-Ṣayyād Ibn al-Shammā‘. Not much is known about this figure. He is mentioned in Hawwārī, \textit{Manāqib al-Bājī}, p. 62, 125.


\textsuperscript{236} ‘Abd al-Salām al-Barjīnī (d. ca. 630/1232). See Hawwārī, \textit{Manāqib al-Bājī}, pp. 61, 118-119. More on this figure later.
Bājī was also a notable early mentor of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī (593-656/1196-1258). And while it is probably true that Bājī many have not been as important a mentor to Shādhilī as was Ibn Mashīsh (d. 625/1227), Bājī’s role cannot be completely minimized especially in light of Shādhilī’s own pronouncements quoted in the recently edited Manāqib al-Bājī.\(^{237}\) Shādhilī’s companionship of Bājī is also confirmed in other works whose editions have come out in recent years.\(^{238}\) It is also interesting that in the recently edited al-Minaḥ al-bādiyah, a kind of curriculum vitae showing the various scholarly works and spiritual traditions that influenced the Moroccan scholar Muḥammad ibn Ḥabīb al-Fāsī (1058-1134/1648-1722), the section on taṣawwuf mentions the influence of al-ṭarīqah al-Bājīyah whose lineage runs Abū Madyan → Bājī → Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī.\(^{239}\) Although the compendious nature of the Minaḥ limits our ability to draw detailed conclusions from this and other cited silsilahs, it is probably safe to assume that, under the inspiration of Abū Madyan, Bājī formulated his own strand of spirituality which he then passed on to Shādhilī.\(^{240}\) Formally, however, Bājī’s influence is usually not

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\(^{237}\) In Ḥawwārī’s hagiographical monograph dedicated to Bājī, Shādhilī is quoted as saying: “When I entered Tunis at the beginning of my career (fī ibtidā’ amrī) I sought the city’s spiritual masters (qaṣadtu man fīhā min al-mashā’īkh). I possessed something (kāna ‘indī shay’) which I wished to disclose to one who would explain its significance (uḥḥibū an a’ruḍūhu ‘alā man yubayyin lī mā fīhī) before I proclaimed it more widely (qabla an ubdīh). But there was none who could explain that thing to me until I met Abū Sa’īd whereby he informed me of my state (akhbaranī ‘an ḥālī) and spoke of my secret (takallama ‘an sirrī). I thereby knew he was a friend of God (walīy Allāh) so I accompanied him (lāzamtuhi) and benefited from him greatly (intaf‘tu bi-hi kathīran).” See Hawwārī, Manāqib al-Bājī p. 75. To my knowledge, in Western scholarship on Shādhilī the sole instance where his connection to Bājī is mentioned is in Mackeen, The Rise of al-Shādhilī, p. 479.

\(^{238}\) Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, Sabk al-maqāl, pp. 79-80. Ibn ‘Ayshūn, al-Rawd al-‘aṭir, p. 82.

\(^{239}\) Fāsī, Minaḥ, vol. 2, p. 115.

\(^{240}\) It’s also worth noting that, on the same page of the Minaḥ, the next “tradition” or “legacy” to be mentioned after that of Bājī is that of Mahdawī ( = al-ṭarīqah al-Mahdāwīyah) which runs: Abū Madyan → Mahdāwī → Bājī. This suggests that Mahdawī too may have formulated his idiosyncratic brand of taṣawwuf.
acknowledged in the initiatic silsilahs of the Shādhilī ṭarīqah. These observations serve as a reminder, first, of the fluid nature of spiritual authority in 12th/13th century North African Sufism. Second, they highlight the historiographical importance of turning to a wide variety of sources including fahrasahs like that of Fāsī as well as hagiographical monographs, to retrieve the significant contributions of figures who might otherwise be lost to the vicissitudes of time.

In fact, Ḥarrālī’s own relationship with Bājī is one that goes unmentioned in the regular biographical sources. Fortunately, an account of their meeting has been preserved in Ḥawwārī’s hagiographical monograph on Bājī. This first meeting probably happened not too long after 606/1209, the year Bājī returned from Hajj. Ḥarrālī recalls seeing Bājī being swarmed by adoring crowds following the Friday prayer at the Zaytūnah mosque. Ḥarrālī himself had a burning desire to greet Bājī and express his “reverence and love for him (i’tiqādī wa-maḥabbatī īyāh)”. These pre-conceived sentiments suggest that Ḥarrālī had known of Bājī in advance—possibly through Abū al-Ṣabr al-Fihri of Sabtah, who during his earlier voyage to the Mashriq may have encountered Bājī either in Tūnis or in Bijāyah. At any rate, when Ḥarrālī found himself in Tūnīs, he felt embarrassed to approach Bājī while wearing fancy clothes (thiyāb rafī’ah). After some hesitation, Ḥarrālī finally “accosted” him (hajamtu ‘alayh):

When he saw me, he held my hand and smiled in my face (tabassama fī wajhī) and said: O Abū al-Hasan, intimate friends are not veiled from each other by the fineness of clothes (al-āḥbāb lā yuḥjibuhum zīnat al-thiyāb), and he spoke my thoughts (fa-takallama mā khaṭara bi-bālī), though he had never before known me or seen me. This [meeting] happened upon my arrival from the Maghrib (kāna dhālika ‘inda wurūdī min al-Maghrib). Thereupon I knew that he was a friend of God (wāliy Allāh).241

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241 Hawwārī, Manāqib Abī Sa’īd al-Bājī, pp. 104-105. Ḥarrālī’s name has been erroneously written (by the copyist or by the editor) as Ḥaṭṭālī (and reportedly in another ms. as Ḥaṭṭālī). The story was related to Hawwārī by Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Abī al-Futūh al-Ṣiqillī, one of Bājī’s oldest and closest disciples, who claims to have heard the story directly from Ḥarrālī. On Ṣiqillī see Hawwārī, Manāqib al-Bājī, pp. 65, 72, 86-7, 97, 104, 126; al-Wazīr al-Sarrāj, al-Ḥulal al-Sundusīyah, vol. 3, 323-4; ‘Āmirī, Taṣawwuf, p. 136. The anecdote of Ḥarrālī’s meeting with Bājī is also cited by Khayyāṭī (Kh. 2011, p. 84) who apparently located the account (with slightly different wording) in a manuscript of a work of
Ḥarrālī seems to have spent some time with Bājī since there are two other anecdotes in *Manāqib al-Bājī* which involve Ḥarrālī. One of these anecdotes—which doesn’t involve Ḥarrālī directly but is related by him as a firsthand witness—is about Bājī’s involvement in the ransoming of Muslim prisoners. Specifically, a pair of women from among a group of about 300 other Muslim women who were captured following the Christian conquest of Majorca and were being held at a Christian outpost on the Tunisian coast, not far from Tunis. Such outposts were part of an extensive system of warehouses and hostels established by Genovese and other European mercantile powers along the Mediterranean littoral. Besides being a transmitter of this story, Ḥarrālī does not appear to be directly implicated. However, later on in his career Ḥarrālī will expose himself to significant risk in his bid to secure the freedom of members of his own family. Ḥarrālī’s extended family members appear to have been taken captive in similar circumstances—shortly after the fall of Majorca—but were being held in much harsher conditions in Christian Spain.

In relating the anecdote, Ḥarrālī explicitly references the fall of Majorca, saying of the events he describes: *kāna dhālika ba’d akhdh Mayūrqah bi-yasīr* which is probably best translated as: “that was shortly after the taking of Mayūrqah”. Since James I of Aragon (r. 1213-1276) captures Majorca in 627/1229, I believe that we are dealing with two separate visits. We know that Ḥarrālī’s first encounter with Bājī outside the mosque of Tūnis occurred when Ḥarrālī had freshly arrived from the Maghrib making his way East. This second anecdote about


243 The phrase could also be rendered as: “that was after the easy/swift taking of Mayūrqah [by the Christians]”.

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captives taken during the fall of Majorca, evidently takes place after the fall of the city in
627/1229, but also before Bājī’s death in 628/1231. It thus has to correspond to some second
passage of Ḥarrālī through Tūnis. This time Ḥarrālī appears to have been tracking back west,
following his first sojourn in the Mashriq.

Given that, like so many of Ḥarrālī’s mentors, Bājī did not leave behind a significant corpus,
it is hard to expound at length on potential areas of influence. The kind of spiritual virtues
detailed in Hawwārī’s hagiography of Bājī—world-renunciation, total reliance on and orientation
towards God—are congruous with the general features of early North African Sufism, and
certainly they are evident in Ḥarrālī’s biography. In fact, Ḥarrālī’s brand of taṣawwuf agrees in
many essential respects with that of Abū Madyan, one of the most emblematic figures of
Maghribī spirituality. Having been the companion of disciples and associates of the latter like
Bājī, Dahmānī, and Abū al-Ṣabr al-Fihrī, Ḥarrālī is evidently an indirect inheritor of the “way” of
Abū Madyan. Thus, it is fairly safe to assume that many of the well-known features of Abū
Madyan’s brand of taṣawwuf are shared by Ḥarrālī. Abū Madyan synthesized Andalusian
spiritual currents, particularly the school of Almería, with the ascetic traditions in Almohad
Morocco, both urban (Ibn Ḥirzihim) and rural (Abū Yaʿzā). Abū Madyan’s way also emphasized
maintaining a balance, a quitessentially Islamic “middle path”, between the opposing spheres of
inner and outer, spiritual and worldly, private and public, sharī’ah and ḥaqīqah. Abū Madyan’s
teachings were also rooted partly in the classical texts of Eastern Sufism, including the Risālah
of al-Qushayrī and the Iḥyāʾ of al-Ghazālī. It is important to point this out because, again, Ḥarrālī
does not explicitly refer to such texts in his corpus. In future studies of Ḥarrālī’s works, when it
comes time to draw parallels to such works, there will at least a verifiable biographical basis for
doing so.
Ibn Abī al-Dunyā²⁴⁴ (606-684/1210-1285)

While Ḥarrālī was informally availing himself of the spiritual mentorship of the figures cited above, it appears he was also instructing pupils in the exoteric sciences. One of Ḥarrālī’s students during his first trip to the Mashriq is Ibn Abī al-Dunyā, a native of Ṭarābulus. In his notice on Ḥarrālī, the hagiographer Ibn Ṭawwāḥ tells us that Ibn Abī al-Dunyā studied *uṣūl*, grammar, and the belles-lettres with Ḥarrālī during the latter’s first passage through Ṭarābulus. Ibn Abī al-Dunyā is quoted as saying: “We received from him these sciences, and benefited from him, and received from him deep knowledge (*akhadhnā ’anhu al-ma’ārif*).” This suggests that this education may have involved more advanced theological concepts and perhaps also some form of Sufi gnosis. Based on Ibn Abī al-Dunyā’s date of birth, and given other biographical considerations pertaining to Ḥarrālī’s biography, it would appear that this first meeting between these occurred while Ibn Abī al-Dunyā was quite young, no older than fifteen.²⁴⁵


²⁴⁵ Ibn Abī al-Dunyā’s birthdate is confirmed by multiple biographers. For Ḥarrālī’s part, we know that on his eastward journey he will meet with the Cairene-based figure of al-Fakhr al-Fārisī, who dies in 622/1225.
In any case, Ibn Abī al-Dunyā was not particularly inclined towards *tašawwuf* at this early stage of his life and ultimately broke with his teacher.\(^{246}\) When Ḥarrālī returned from his sojourn in the Mashriq, passing through Ṭarābulus a second time around 628/1230\(^{247}\), Ibn Abī al-Dunyā noted that a disturbing change of outlook had come over his teacher: an excessive sense of compassion towards even the most egregious violators of the sharī’ah: degenerates like drunkards, thieves, and fornicators. Ibn Abī al-Dunyā is quoted as saying:

“If he [Ḥarrālī] saw one who fornicates he would weep for his sake and have compassion for him (*yabkī ‘alayh wa-yarhamuh*), and if he saw one drinking wine he would feel pity for his sake and his tears would flow (*yashfiq ‘alayh wa-tajri ‘abratuh*), and similarly for one who steals and openly avows his sin (*wa-kadhālika man yasriq wa-bi-dhanbihi yunṭiq*); it was as if he were rendering licit [the sinner’s] actions (*fa-ka’annahu muḥallil la-hu fi’luh*).”\(^{248}\)

Thus, after initially being full of admiration for Ḥarrālī, Ibn Abī al-Dunyā apparently turned against his teacher in protest of what, in his view, was a leniency that strayed too far from the ideal indignation proper to a serious Mālikī faqīh. Ibn Abī al-Dunyā is quoted as saying: “I used to criticize his attitude (*kunnā nankuru ‘alayhi ḥālihi*) and condemn [the influence he received during] his travels (*wa nudhimmu tirḥālihi*).” After describing Ibn Abī al-Dunyā’s critique of his teacher’s excessive, antinomian levels of indulgence, Ibn Ṭawwāḥ is quick to come to Ḥarrālī’s defense:

God forbid that the friends of God would make licit that which God has made forbidden. Rather, they view things from the perspective of mercy and an all-enveloping kindness. Thus, in his heart, he feels compassion towards [the sinner] and is pained by [the sinner’s] outward transgression of the law. In such a [saintly] person God has [deposited] secrets that are known only by the finest and

\(^{246}\) In Nā‘ib al-Anṣārī’s *Nafaḥāt al-nisrīn* he is given the *laqab* al-Ṣūfī (الصوفي) but this is probably just a misreading of his kunyah al-Ṣadafi (الصوفي).  

\(^{247}\) This date is deduced from the chronological implications, discussed above, of Ḥarrālī’s second encounter with Abū Sa‘īd al-Bājī (d. 628/1231) and the anecdote related to the fall of Majorca in 1230.  

most virtuous. Indeed under each of them [i.e. the saints] there is a treasure over which a wall has been erected (kanzun uqīma ‘alayhi jidār).249

This last phrase is a reference to the Qur’ānic account al-Khidr and the hidden wisdom which Moses could not comprehend. Ḥarrālī’s tendency towards displays of merciful compassion (hulm) actually becomes a characteristic aspect of his hagiographic persona and will be discussed in more depth later.250 For our purposes here, it will suffice to note that this anecdote may have some implications as far as Ḥarrālī’s spiritual biography is concerned. In the Miftāḥ, Ḥarrālī avers that he received a fath following his period of study under Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qurṭubī in Madīnah. This period almost certainly coincides with that in between Ḥarrālī’s first and second passages through the city of Ṭarābulus, that is, it coincides with the travels over the course of which Ḥarrālī’s “antinomian” outlook crystalized, according to Ibn Abī al-Dunyā. Thus, it is possible that Ḥarrālī’s mystical breakthrough (fath) may have indeed occurred during his sojourn in Egypt and the Hijāz.

At the same time, not too much stock should be put into Ibn Abī al-Dunyā’s impression of a total and radical change overcoming his teacher. Overall, Ḥarrālī’s turn to taṣawwuf was a gradual one that begins, as we have seen, early during his Maghrib years at the hands of Ayyūb

249 Ibid. It should also be noted that our only source of this encounter between Ḥarrālī and Ibn Abī al-Dunyā is the hagiographer Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, an avowed Sufi apologist about whom more will be said in chapter seven (“Tarragona Letter”). In this particular case, Ibn Ṭawwāḥ identifies his sources vaguely as “trusted companions who are gnostics and treaders of the [spiritual] path” (al-aṣḥāb al-mawthūq bi-him min al-‘ārifīn al-sālikīn). Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s account clearly presents a Sufi perspective. However, on the basic facts of the account—that some of Ḥarrālī’s actions or views prompted accusations of antinomianism by the Ibn Abī al-Dunyā—I do consider it to be credible. Not only does the level of anecdotal detail suggest that the account reflects real events, but also neither Ḥarrālī’s actions nor Ibn Abī al-Dunyā’s statements are out of character. In fact, Ibn Abī al-Dunyā would probably find no cause to dispute retelling of events in the Sabk, though he might take issue with Ibn Ṭawwāh’s his hagiographical analysis.

250 In chapter seven on “Ḥarrālī’s karāmāt”.
al-Fihārī of Sabtah. In addition, Ḥarrālī’s period companionship with his Ifrīqyan mentors Bājī and Dahmānī almost certainly took place concurrently with, if not prior to, his tutelage of Ibn Abī al-Dunyā in Ṭarābulus.

Another factor to consider is that, at the time when he was studying under Ḥarrālī, Ibn Abī al-Dunyā was still quite young, an eager hothead probably no older than fifteen. A long and storied career still lay ahead of him. Over the course of two trips to the Mashriq—one in 624/1227 and another in 633/1236—Ibn Abī al-Dunyā would study the religious sciences under venerable masters. In Alexandria he studied under Jamāl al-Dīn al-Ṣafrāwī251 (d. 636/1238) as well as under ‘Abd al-Karīm Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh al-Iskandarī252 (d. 612/1215). One especially notable teacher of Ibn Abī al-Dunyā was the eminent Shāfi‘ī jurist ‘Izz al-Dīn ibn ‘Abd al-Salām (d. 660/1262), whom he must have met in Damascus, since it is not until 628/1240 that ‘Izz al-Dīn settles in Cairo. Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām seems to have heavily influenced Ibn Abī al-Dunyā in the domain of uṣūl. But what is notable about this particular connection is that Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām was also, at least during his early career, a famous Sufi antagonist. In Damascus, not only were there well-known tensions between him and Ibn ‘Arabī, he also had a confrontational encounter with Ḥarrālī.253


253 The infamous anecdote of Ḥarrālī’s heated encounter with ‘Izz al-Dīn is discussed in chapter eight, “Damascus”.
On his return to Ifrīqiyya from the Mashriq, Ibn Abī al-Dunyā rose to become a well-known scholar who enjoyed Ḥafṣid patronage. Between 655/1257 and 658/1260, the Ḥafṣid amīr al-Mustanṣir commissioned him to oversee the construction of the Mustanṣīrīyah madrasah in Ṭarābulus, one of the earliest Mālikī madrasas in Ifrīqiyya. Later, Ibn Abī al-Dunyā was summoned by al-Mustanṣir to the capital where he would hold various official posts including qādī al-jamā‘ah and muftī at the city’s grand mosque. It was probably in his capacity as statesman and Ḥafṣid functionary that he wrote his Mudhakkī al-fu‘ād fī al-ḥadḍ ʿalā al-jihād. According to Ghubrīnī, Ibn Abī al-Dunyā’s edicts (fatāwā) were disseminated throughout the wider Ifrīqiyya region including in Bijāyah. During his well-attended lectures, Ibn Abī al-Dunyā mainly covered the subjects of fiqh and uṣūl, basing himself on Juwaynī’s Irshād and his Burhān, as well as Ghazālī’s al-Mustafā. Ibn Abī al-Dunyā himself authored, among other works, a creedal treatise (al-ʿaqīdah) which he had his students memorize and recite in his presence.254

Ibn Abī al-Dunyā was also one of the pivotal spearheads of a Mālikī revival movement in Ifrīqiyya during the latter half of the 13th century. During the Almohad era, the ban on study of furū’ (the detailed study of Mālikī fiqh that had flourished in the Maghrib under the Almoravids) appears to have had an overall dampening effect on Mālikīsm in the Ifrīqiyya region. In the view of the historian Brunschvig, Mālikism in Ifrīqiyya and the Eastern Maghrib was by the middle of the 13th century something of a spent force.255 In many ways similar to the uṣūlī movement that

254 Ibn Abī al-Dunyā’s corpus continues to be transmitted in the Muslim West down to the time of Mintūrī (mid. 15th century). See Fahrasat al-Mintūrī, p. 364, nr. 802/513.

255 “Le fiqh mālikite…officiellement combattu ou mal soutenu, privé pendant longtemps de maîtres de valeur et presque rejeté de l’enseignement, s’étioit et traînait une chétive vie. Le Muwaṭṭa’ de l’imam Mālik pouvait encore, comme recueil de traditions, bénéficier ouvertement de l’attachement des fidèles; mais les livres de furū’ du rite étaient peu ou mal étudiés.” Brunschvig, Berbérie, vol. 2, pp. 286-8. This
had taken place in Andalusia in the 12th century, the old bastion of Mālikī conservatism that was Ifrīqiyyā began stirring in the late 13th and early 14th centuries with a desire for reinvigoration and reform. Ifrīqiyan minds returning from the Mashriq after having been influenced by Shāfi‘ī masters sought to integrate uṣūl methodology into Ifrīqiyyā legal practice. Ibn Abī al-Dunyā was not the only prominent face of this reform movement. Other leading figures include Ibn Zaytūn\(^{256}\) (d. 691/1292) and Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Mishdhālī\(^{257}\) (d. 731/1330). Although of different backgrounds, of what these reformers shared in common was their Mashriqī training under uṣūl-oriented masters of Shāfi‘ī fiqh.

But among the ranks of the Mālikī elite leading the charge of reform, there was a fundamental disagreement over how best to apply uṣūl methodology. As Ghubrīnī sees it—and Ibn Khaldūn will later echo a similar explanation—the debate often boiled down to question of whether to use the tools offered by the science of logic (manṭiq). Those who advocated for its use were known as the “moderns” (al-muta‘akhkhirūn) and their methods were informed by the teachings of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and Ibn al-Ḥājib. Figures exemplifying this tendency include the aforementioned Ibn Zaytūn in Tūnis, while in Bijāyah, the ‘Unwān gives us the example of

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‘Abd al-Wahhāb ibn Yūsuf258 (d. after 680/1281), a figure who was apparently interested in theology, philosophy, logic, and the methodology of the “moderns”, i.e. those promoted by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī.

Opposing them and seemingly more numerous were the ancients (al-mutaqaddimūn) who took their cue from earlier conceptions articulated in Ibn Abī Zaid al-Qayrawānī’s 10th century work al-Risālah, as well as in the works of Juwaynī and al-Barādhi259 (d. 386/966). This faction is sometimes also known as “the school of Qayrawān” because of the reverence accorded to the legist Saḥnūn al-Qayrawānī (d. 240/854), author of the much-studied Mudawwanah. An example of a mutaqaddimūn-style reformist in the ‘Unwān is the figure of Aḥmad Ibn Khālid of Malaga260 (d. ca. 660/1262). Of Andalusian origins but educated in the Maghrib, this figure taught Ibn Sīnā’s al-Ishārāt wa-al-tanbīhāt from beginning to end, but at the same time did not approve of Rāzī’s introduction of logic in the discipline of uṣūl.

Ibn Abī al-Dunyā, too, was partial to the school of Qayrawān. He was critical of the ideas of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and opposed the methodological use of logic (kāna yunkir ‘ilm al-manṭiq). At the same time, he taught uṣūl and authored a work seemingly justifying the use of analogical reasoning (qiyās) in fiqh, namely, his Ḥall al-iltibās fī al-radd ‘alā nufāt al-qiyās. Ibn Abī al-

258 ‘Abd al-Wahhāb in fact studied under Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and was one of the greatest authorities in Bijāyah on the works of the logician al-Khūnajī (d. 646/1248) Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, pp. 233-4, nr. 64.


260 The ‘Unwān relates an almost “Newtonian” story of this philosophy and natural sciences-inclined thinker. One day, he had climbed a tree to pick some of its fruit while at the same time contemplating the problem of movement (al-harakah). Suddenly, he had a eureka moment so powerful it caused him to fall from the tree. On impact he passed out and remained at the base of the tree for the better part of a day. Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, pp. 73-4, nr. 11
Dunyā had a fraught relationship with Ibn Zaytūn, who had studied under students of Rāzī and was apparently an advocate of the more avant-garde methodologies of the “moderns”. The two rivals both held high posts in Tūnis under al-Mustanṣir and both ultimately left their mark on the juridical scene of the Ḥafṣid capital. Meanwhile in Bijāyah, Mishaddālī adopted a more moderate approach, attempting to reconcile the two schools of thought. According to Brunschvig the upshot of this rivalry between these two opposing—but in some sense complementary—currents, was the overall reinvigoration of Mālikīsm in the second half of the 13th century.261

Unfortunately, neither Ḥarrālī’s corpus nor his biography give us any definitive indication of where he himself stood on this issue. Although Ḥarrālī’s biographers state that he composed works on uṣūl al dīn, uṣūl al-фиqh and even logic, none of his extant works specialize in such technical subjects.262 If it is any indication, some of Ḥarrālī’s Bijāyah-based students who flourished in the second half of the 13th century (discussed in chapter six) are said to have adhered to the methodology of the mutaqaddimūn. In any case, it is likely that, around 1230 during the most active period of Ḥarrālī’s career in Bijāyah, Rāzī’s ideas may have not yet penetrated that far West. Some contemporary scholars claim that it was Ibn Zaytūn (621-691/1224-1292) who first introduced Rāzī’s uṣūl works in Ifrīqiyā.263 In other words, the terms

261 See Brunschvig, La Berbérie Orientale, vol. 2, p. 290-1. A revisionist view can be found in Van Staëvel, Almohades et Mālikites de Tunis.

262 In the Unwān, Ghubrīnī states that Ḥarrālī was a master of uṣūl al dīn and uṣūl al-фиqh and composed treatises in these fields, though no specific titles are mentioned. Ghubrīnī also states that Ḥarrālī was knowledgeable in ma ‘qūlāt al-ḥukamā’ which he appears to equate with logic (manṭiq). He further states that Ḥarrālī composed a work on logic titled al-Maʾqūlāt al-uwal. Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 144.

of the debate during Ḥarrālī’s time probably differed significantly from those of late 13th and early 14th centuries.

**Ibn Bazīzah**

Another important Ifrīqiyan student of Ḥarrālī was the juridical Sufi and Tūnis native Ibn Bazīzah. Lecturer at the Zaytūnah mosque, Ibn Bazīzah would have surely rubbed shoulders at some point in the Ḥafṣid capital with the aforementioned Ibn Abī al-Dunyā. Their scholarly interests overlapped in many ways, and both were prolific writers. Ibn Bazīzah was a ḥadīth-oriented specialist of Mālikī fiqh and Ash’arī kalām, though it is not known for sure if he too travelled to the Mashriq. Among his most important local teachers were ‘Abd al-Salām al-Barjīnī (d. ca. 630/1232) and Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Jabbār al-Sūṣī (d. 662/1263).

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265 Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Salām ibn ‘Isā al-Barjīnī. Some biographers claim that Barjīnī (d. ca. 630/1232) studied under the renowned Mālikī legist al-Imām Muḥammad al-Māzarī (d. 536/1141) but this is doubtful due to the disparity in their death dates. Ibn Qunfudh even gives Barjīnī’s death year as (662/1263-4). There may be some confusion between ‘Abd al-Salām and one of his sons; for example, in Hawwārī’s Manāqib we encounter [Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Salām]. At any rate, ‘Abd al-Salām al-Barjīnī was apparently a specialist in Mālikī fiqh whose early education took place in al-Mahdiyah. He spent the later part of his career in Tūnis and had close ties to the Almohad governorship, reportedly serving as the head qāḍī of Tūnis between the years 618 and 620. He was also for a time the prayer leader (imām) and preacher (khaṭīb) at the Zaytūnah mosque. Barjīnī is also cited as a close disciple of revered Sufi master (and Ḥarrālī mentor) Abū Sa’īd al-Bājī. Hawwārī, Manāqib Abū Sa’īd al-Bājī, pp. 61, 118-9. Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, Sabk, p. 47. Qunfudh, Fārisiyyah, pp. 105, 126. Makhlūf, Shajarat al-Nūr, vol. 1, p. 242, nr. 563. Makhlūf, Tarājim, vol. 1, pp. 86-7, nr. 36. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, Kitāb al-‘umr, vol. 1, pp. 707-9.

266 Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Jabbār al-Ru’aynī al-Sūṣī, in reference to the city of Sūsah (Sousse) on the Tunisian littoral. Born in 567/1172, this Mālikī faqīh had under studied the qāḍī Zakarīyā’ al-Ḥaddād al-Mahdawī, who was a student of the al-imām al-Māzarī. Sūṣī lived to a ripe old age.
According to some biographers, Ibn Bazīzah went on to achieve the level of mujtahid. Among his contributions to the field is a commentary on Ibn al-Kharrāṭ’s al-Ahkām and a commentary on ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s Talqīn. In philology, Ibn Bazīzah produced commentaries on Zamakhsharī’s al-Mufaṣṣal and Zajjājī’s al-Jumal. Ibn Bazīzah was also an accomplished exegete who, in his tafsīr titled al-Bayān wa-tahṣīl al-muṭṭali ‘alā ‘ulūm al-tanzīl, synthesized the approaches of Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144) (al-Kashshāf ‘an ḥaqā’iq al-tanzīl) and the Andalusian Ibn ‘Atiyah (d. 541/1147) (al-Muḥarrar al-wafīz).

Ibn Bazīzah’s most famous work is probably his al-Is’ād fī taḥrīr maqāṣid al-Irshād, a commentary on Juwaynī’s Irshād which he completed in Tūnis in 644/1246-7. In this work, Ibn Bazīzah self-references another work, apparently lost, in which he refutes the critique of kalām articulated in Ibn Rushd’s Manāḥij al-adillah. Also on Ash’arī theology is Ibn Bazīzah’s

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267 ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq “Ibn al-Kharrāṭ” al-Ishbīlī. More on this figure in the next chapter.

268 Titled Rawdat al-mustabīn fī sharḥ kitāb al-Talqīn (published Beirut, 2010). Apparently Ibn Bazīzah’s work influenced the works of several later legal scholars such as Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī’s (d. 1449) Fath al-bārī, Ḵāsim al-Qaṣṭallānī’s (d. 1518) Irshād al-sārī, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah’s (d. 1350) I’lām al-muwaqqi’īn, and Abū Ḥayyān’s (d. 1344) al-Bahr al-muḥīṭ.


270 A manuscript copy survives in Fez’s Qarawiyīn mosque library, nr. 28. Cited in ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, Kitāb al-‘umr.

commentary on Salāljī’s al-‘Aqīdah al-burhānīyah. However, Ibn Bazīzah’s chain (isnād) linking him to the Burhānīyah is somewhat problematic. In another later commentary on the Burhānīyah, al- Yafranī (d. 734/1334) acknowledges his debt to the commentary of Ibn Bazīzah. Yafranī also alleges that Ibn Bazīzah studied the Burhānīyah intensively under Ibn al-Kattānī—Salāljī’s principal student, and one of Ḥarrālī’s early teachers. The main problem with this claim is that Ibn Bazīzah’s birth date (606/1209), on which there appears to be unanimous agreement by his biographers, falls well after Ibn al-Kattānī’s death date (596/1200), which is also fairly well established. In my view, there is quite obviously an intermediate figure who is missing in the chain of transmission between Salaljī and Ibn Bazīzah, someone who lived well past Ibn al-Kattānī’s death date and who is known to have passed through Ifrīqiyyā. In my view, Ḥarrālī is one of the most likely candidates for the role of missing link.

Ibn Bazīzah was openly inclined to taṣawwuf, much more so than Ibn Abī al-Dunyā. In a work on the shorter side by Ibn Bazīzah titled al-Anwār fī faḍl al-Qur’ān wa-al-du‘ā’ wa-al-istighfār—a multi-themed, Sufi-oriented homiletic, which includes some hermeneutical insights

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274 There is, however, another possible candidate that comes to mind, though he is not explicitly mentioned in any sources as Ibn Bazīzah’s teacher; this would be Tāj al-Dīn al-Sharīshī (d. 641/1243), a student of Ibn al-Kattānī in Fez (and a co-pupil of Ḥarrālī) who also emigrated to the Mashriq. I will have more to say on this figure later. But one intriguing coincidence worth pointing out is that Sharīshī continued his kalām training in Egypt under al-Muqtaraḥ (d. 612/1215); at the same time, the Tunis manuscript of Ibn Bazīzah’s commentary on al-Irshād is found in a collection which also contains al-Muqtaraḥ’s commentary on the Irshād (cited in Ibn Bazīzah’s notice in Maḥfūẓ, Tarājim). In addition, the recent edition of Ibn Bazīzah’s commentary on the Irshād (al-Kuwayt, 2014) also contains frequent references to al-Muqtaraḥ.
into the Qur‘ān—Ḥarrālī is explicitly named as a teacher.275 Even if Ḥarrālī is cited only in this work, it is likely that he tutored Ibn Bazīzah in a variety of other sciences, including especially in *kalām*, since no real specialists in the field are mentioned in Ibn Bazīzah’s biographies.

The biographical literature is also laconic when it comes to naming Ibn Bazīzah’s own students. The only student that I have been able to verify is Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Kinnānī276 (d. after 690/1291), who was at one time the *khaṭīb* of Bijāyah and a teacher of the famous grammarian and exegete Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī277 (654-745/1256-1344). The editor of Ibn Bazīzah’s *Rawḍat al-mustabīn* also counts as one of his students the aforementioned *uṣūlī* Ibn Zaytūn.278

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277 On Kinnānī’s famous pupil see Fatehi-nezhad, Enayatollah and Gholami, Rahim, “Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī”, in *Encyclopaedia Islamica*.

CHAPTER FIVE: Egypt and the Ḥijāz

Following his sojourn in Ifrīqiyya, Ḥarrālī continued trekking East, passing through Egypt before reaching the spiritual centers of the Muslim world, Madīnah and Makkah. This chapter examines two figures of very different backgrounds who mentored Ḥarrālī during this period: al-Fakhr al-Fārisī and Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qurṭubī. Neither are particularly familiar to contemporary scholarship, owing most likely to a lack of a corpus. But their importance can be reasonably well established on the basis of the biographical literature alone. More than Dahmānī and Bājī of the last chapter, these two mentors of Ḥarrālī played an equally important role in both traditional scholarship and in taṣawwuf, mediating between the two discursive worlds. This chapter also looks at some of Ḥarrālī’s early disciples who adhered to him when he was just beginning to come into his own as a spiritual master.
Further Eastern, Ḥarrālī encounters the figure of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Fārisī, commonly referred to as al-Fakhr al-Fārisī. Born in the town of Khabr near Shirāz ca. 530/1134, Fārisī served several Persian masters in his early years. One source indicates that Fārisī was initiated by his father into a Sufi tradition whose silsilah traces back to Abū ‘Abd Allāh Ibn Khāfīf al-Shīrāzī (d. ca. 371/982), an Ash‘arī-oriented Sufi and a prolific author. During his period of study in Baghdād, Fārisī was most likely the disciple of Abū al-Najīb al-Suhrawardī (fl. 6th/12th century). Among Fārisī’s co-disciples under Abū al-Najīb would have been Shihāb al-Dīn ‘Umar al-Suhrawardī (d. 632/1234).

In 566/1171 Fārisī traveled to Damascus where he studied under the famous muḥaddith Ibn ‘Asākir (d. 571/1175). That same year, he moved to Cairo where he remained for the rest of his life, except for two important sojourns in Alexandria where he heared ḥadīth at the feet of

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282 Hartmann, EI2, “Suhrawardī”.
another influential traditionalist, Abū al-Ṭāhir al-Silafī (472/1078-576/1180). In Cairo, Fārisī was also the disciple of the Sufi traditionist Rūzbehān (d. 578/1182). His a co-disciple was the famous Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (d. 617/1220). Figures like Rūzbehān and Abū al-Ṭāhir al-Silafī embodied the partnership between ḥadīth studies and taṣawwuf that was so instrumental to the Ayyubid program of Sunni revival in post-Fāṭimid Egypt.

Fārisī’s own career also embodied the ḥadīth-taṣawwuf combination. Ibn Rushayd’s Mil’ al-‘aybah provides several examples of figures who studied ḥadīth under Fārisī and were also initiated by him into Sufism. Besides his Persian servant Rūzbihār, one notable student of Fārisī was Zakīy al-Dīn al-Mundhirī (d. 656/1258), a Cairo native and author of the ḥadīth work al-Targhib wa-al-tarhib and the biographical anthology al-Takmilah li-wafayāt al-naqalah. Within the Caireen milieu, Fārisī may have also functioned as a kind of ambassador of Persian Sufism, though to what extent remains to be determined. In one famous anecdote, for example,

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286 The image typically invoked is the investiture of the initiatic cloak (labs khirqat al-taṣawwuf). In his commentary on Ibn Ṣafīr’s Risālah, Gril translates the expression as “manteaux d’investiture initiatique”, explaining that this mode of initiation which is mostly current in Persian Sufism consists of clothing the disciple with a symbol of the master’s spiritual state (Ibn Ṣafīr, Risālah, p. 43).
Fārisī led a large assembly—composed largely of lay uninitiates and members of the general public—into a music-induced Sufi trance.

Counted by the biographer Suyūṭī among the sages (al-ḥukamā’), al-Fakhr al-Fārisī left behind a handful of works on kalām and taṣawwuf. Among the few works that appear extant is a treatise on Sufism titled al-Iʿāna ‘alá daf’ al-ijāna (“The Aid for Dissipating the Cloud over the Heart”).287 Another treatise on the Sufi path is his Natāʾij al-qurbā wa-nafāʾ is al-ghurbā.288 Among works attributed to Fārisī in the biographical literature are his Kitāb al-asrār wa-sirr al-iskār in which, according to Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 1448), he tried to synthesize between al-ḥaqīqah and al-sharīʿah but showed a lack of “propriety” (fa-takallaqa wa-qāla mā lā yanbaghī). Fārisī reportedly also authored Maṭīyat al-naql wa-ʿaṭīyat al-ʿaql (on uṣūl) and al-Farq bayn al-ṣūfī wa-al-faqīr (on taṣawwuf). There is also his short treatise on Sufi love, Jamḥat al-nahāʿ an lamḥat al-mahā.290 At least a selection of Fārisī’s works continue to be circulated up until the 15th century as far afield as the Maghrib.291

Ibn Ṭawwāḥ is the only biographer of Ḥarrālī to mention his meeting with al-Fakhr al-Fārisī. Though no details of this encounter are explicitly provided, the context suggests that it revolved around Sufi spirituality:

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287 Conserved at Cairo’s Dār al-Kutub. Cited in Gril, Risālah.


The first from whom [Harrālī] received the science of taṣawwuf is al-Shaykh Abū al-Šabr al-Sabtī [missing word: thumma?] he met Abū Yūṣūf al-Dahmānī, then he met al-Fakhr al-Fārisī[292] [and] a large group of Sufis (jama’ah wāfira’ min al-ṣufiyah).[293]

Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s mention of the names of Sabtī, Dahmānī and Fārisī in such proximate succession in this passage suggests that Harrālī may have sought out the latter figures at the recommendation of the former. We know, in fact, that Dahmānī had visited Fārisī during his passage through Egypt on his way to Makkah in 595/1199. In the Manāqib of Dahmānī, it is reported on the authority of unnamed Sufis (fuqarā’) that on the day of Dahmānī’s death in Qayrawān, Fārisī prayed on his soul in Cairo, telling his companions that “a man from among the ṣāliḥīn has passed away today”.294 Fārisī may have therefore also been acquainted with members of the wider network of Ifrīqiyan “Madyanite” Sufis. I have also found evidence that Fārisī was in correspondence with Abū Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Mājirī (550-631/1155-1234), an influential Sufi from Dukkālah in the Maghrib and a disciple of Abū Madyan.295

292 Although the name is transcribed as such in the edition, the editor’s note references al-Fakhr al-Rāzī, not apparently because of any ambiguity in the manuscript, but probably only because Rāzī’s is the more familiar name.

293 Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, Sabk al-maqāl, p. 97.

294 Qayrawānī, Asrār, p. 157.

295 Having spent nearly twenty years in the city of Alexandria earlier in his career, Abū Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ may have actually met al-Fakhr al-Fārisī in person. During his time in Alexandria, Ṣāliḥ was formally the disciple of ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Jazūlī (d. ca. 592/1196), a prominent student of Abū Madyan and his main representative in Egypt. Abū Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ’s importance also stems from his creation of a yearly Sufi-led pilgrimage caravan from the Maghrib to Madīnah and Makkah. The passage citing his correspondence with Fārisī can be found in Mājirī, al-Minhāj al-wādiḥ fi tahqiq karāmāt Abī Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ, vol. 2, pp. 536-7. On Abū Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Majirī’s biography see Ibn Qunfudh, Uns, pp. 35-6, 61-6. Cornell, Realm, pp. 138-41. Benchekroun, La vie intellectuelle, pp. 109-12. Gril, EI3, “Abū Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ”. 

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For Ḥarrālī’s part, at least one source indicates that he specifically visited Cairo. Ḥarrālī may have also stopped in Alexandria during this phase of his career. Thus it is probably safe to assume that he met al-Fakhr al-Fārisī in Cairo sometime in the early 1220’s. Thus, Ḥarrālī’s spiritual formation appears to have been affected to some degree by Fārisī and potentially by elements of the Persian Sufi tradition. The two may have also connected over other shared interests. For example, Fārisī’s expertise in kalām would have dovetailed with the ʿusūl-oriented education Ḥarrālī had received in Fez under theologians such as Ibn al-Kattānī. We also know that Fārisī’s hadīth teacher Abū al-Ṭāhir al-Silaffī was a transmitter of the works of Zamakhsharī, including the latter’s tafsīr. And according to some of his biographers, Fārisī was himself something of an exegete, though evidently not a widely famed one. Still, there remains the possibility that Fārisī had some effect on Ḥarrālī’s approach to the Qur’ān. It should be remembered that Ḥarrālī’s students Ibn ʿĀbid and Ibn Bazīzah both drew on Zamakhshārī in their apparently lost Qur’ān commentaries.

Fārisī spent his final days confined in the maʿbad of Dhū al-Nūn al-Miṣrī, a structure which he had himself built or commissioned following a vision of the Prophet. Fārisī’s own tomb still

296 See the of Abū ʿAlī al-Andalūsī in Ibn al-Mustawfī, Tārīkh Irbil, vol. 1, pp. 430-2, nr. 317. This figure is discussed further below.

297 Ibn al-ʿImādiyyah, one of the earliest biographers to mention Ḥarrālī, states that the latter visited Alexandria and taught grammar and ḥadīth (Ibn al-ʿImādiyyah, Dhayl Takmilat al-Ikmāl, vol. 1, p. 226). Given the largely traditional character of these subjects, it is likely that this sojourn in Alexandria occurred earlier in Ḥarrālī’s career on this first voyage to the Mashriq. In later years, it is unlikely that Ḥarrālī would dedicate his teaching sessions purely to grammar or to ḥadīth—even if such sciences would have been integral to his disquisitions on more advanced subjects. According to other sources, Ḥarrālī also passes through the Egyptian towns of Bilbīs and Fayyūm. However, these sojourns are part of Ḥarrālī’s voyage to the Mashriq in the final years of his career (Ch. 8, “Salāwī”).

298 Mintawrī, Fahrasah, p. 301 nr. 555/266.
stands in the Qurāfah al-Šughrā cemetery of Cairo.²⁹⁹ His image in the later biographical literature is the object of some polemical contention. Almost all the biographical sources attach the laqab “Sūfī” to his name, regardless of whether the biographer is pro- or anti- taṣawwuf. This tendency seems to be due to Fārisī’s rootedness in the Persian Sufi tradition. Very few Maghribī shuyūkh, for example, are given such a laqab.³⁰⁰

Some of the doxologies (khutbahs) of Fārisī’s works are quoted by his biographers, particularly by disapproving ones like Dhahabī. After reproducing the doxology of Fārisī’s (presumably lost) Barq al-niqā’ wa-shams al-liqā’, Dhahabī characterizes Fārisī’s writings as delirious blather (al-hadhayān wa-al-fushār) in the style of philosophizing Sufis (‘alā ūrūqat al-ṣūfiyyah al-falāsifah).³⁰¹ Still, Fārisī’s association with the irreproachable figure of Silafī presents

²⁹⁹ Fakhr al-Fārisī’s tomb lies some 500 meters South of the well-known tomb of Imām al-Shāfī‘i, in a neighborhood that also encompasses the tombs of the Prophet’s companion al-Imām al-Laythīa, Dhū al-Nūn al-Miṣrī, and Abū Hājar al-‘Asqalānī. A positionally accurate, if very dated, map of the major tombs in the Qurāfah is the one included in Massignon’s aforementioned article. I had the opportunity to personally visit Fārisī’s final resting place in the Qurāfah (Dec. 2018). The courtyard in which the tomb is located is hemmed in by walls and two locked gates, one facing south, the other west. The tomb structure, which features an elegant if architecturally unusual carved stone column, can still be clearly viewed through the two grill gates. The surrounding area is run down, with piles of rubble and trash strewn about unpaved roads.

³⁰⁰ Commenting on Ibn Žāfir’s Risālah, Gril notes that biographers’ tendency to refrain from using the term Şūfī to designate Maghrībi and Andalusian masters of the 13th century corresponds to a widespread attitude at that time. It stems, he suggests, from a reluctance to portray the body of knowledge which marks the spiritual path as an independent science, both parallel and somehow superior to the other Islamic religious sciences. On the rare occasions when Ibn Žāfir does use the term “şūfī”, it is to designate followers of an initiatic path of Persian origin, like Fakhr al-Dīn al-Fārisī as well as mystics who lived in the khanqāhs of Egypt, like Sa‘īd al-su’a’dā. Such individuals, according to Gril, generally would have had less reservations about using the label or having it applied to them. Gril goes on to caution: “Toutefois il ne faudrait pas accorder à cette différence d’attitude une importance excessive. [Ibn Žāfir] et les autres cheikhs de la Risāla parlent de la voie initiatique et de la science ésotérique au moyen tantôt d’un language technique exprimant vertus et connaissances, tantôt de propos ou d’anecdotes qui en sont l’illustration. L’enseignement qu’ils vēhèulent ne diffère nullement pour l’essentiel et sur bien des points de détail de celui des manuels classiques du taṣawwuf oriental, tells les ouvrages de Kâlîbâdhî, Sarrâj, Qushayrî.” See Ibn Žāfir, Risālah pp. 37-8 (trans. Gril).

³⁰¹ I must admit that the khutbahs of Fārisī, as they appear in some of his biographical notices, are marked by a certain extravagance and opaqueness that is reminiscent of the writings of an Ibn Sab’īn. While I do
a frustrating challenge for a biographer like Dhahabī who instinctively wants to write Fārisī off as a heretic, but is obliged to acknowledge his impeccable ḥadīth credentials. In fact, one of Dhahabī’s own esteemed ḥadīth transmitters, Aḥmad ibn Ishāq al-Abarqūhī302 (d. 701/1302) heard ḥadīth at a very young age from al-Fakhr al-Fārisī.303

Some early biographers, like Yāfiʿī, put up an unreserved defense of Fārisī. Udfuwī (d. 748/1347) is more equivocal, citing Fārisī’s reputation for socially-conscious virtue (ṣalāḥ) but also mentioning his philosophical proclivities. But there is a whole line of later biographers who are happy to parrot Dhahabī’s condemnation. In several cases, however, the biographers will attribute two seemingly contradictory personal traits noting, on the one hand, that Fārisī was a witty, jocular person (kāna ‘indahu duʿābah) while also citing anecdotal accounts of his irascible temperament and tendency to disparage other scholars. One interesting case is Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī who in his Lisān al-mīzān vacillates between condemnation and praise, but finally, not endorse Dhahabī’s characterization, I will say that when the khutbahs of Fārisī and Ḥarrālī are placed side by side (even the khutbahs of Ḥarrālī’s treatises on the science of letters), Ḥarrālī comes off as a paragon of simplicity and straightforwardness. The contrast speaks not only to obvious differences in writing styles but also different cultural influences and perhaps also different prospective audiences and authorial objectives.


303 Fārisī’s transmission of ḥadīth to Ishāq al-Abarqūhī and his young son Aḥmad is mentioned in Fārisī’s notice in Udfuwī, Badr, vol. 2, p. 716.
before his own death, apparently insisted on being buried close to Fārisī’s tomb in the Qarāfah.\textsuperscript{304}

It is also worth mentioning that Fārisī was on close terms with Egypt’s Ayyubid ruler al-Malik al-Kāmil\textsuperscript{305} (r. 1218-1238). And there is a fascinating possibility, passionately promoted by Louis Massignon, that Fārisī was present during Saint Francis of Assisi’s (d. 1226) famous audience with al-Kāmil. This encounter would have occurred in 616/1219 in the midst of an ongoing war between al-Kāmil’s forces and a Crusader expedition that was attempting to take the Egyptian city of Damietta (Dimyāṭ).\textsuperscript{306} Basing himself on the accounts of Bonaventure (d. 1274), who refers to a “vecchio santo” who was present as a religious advisor to the Sultan, Massignon is convinced that this “old saint” corresponds to al-Fakhr al-Fārisī, who was by then around ninety-years-old. Another early source known as the Chronicle of Ernoul (1227-1229) mentions the presence of a group of “qādīs” and “religious clerks” who were experts in Islamic law.\textsuperscript{307} There are no definitive records in Arabic literature of al-Kāmil’s meeting with Francis. However, Massignon believes that he found a passing reference to it in Ibn al-Zayyāt’s \textit{al-}

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[304]{Massignon, \textit{La Cité des Morts au Caire}, p. 62. As far as I could observe, ‘Asqalānī’s tomb in the Qarāfah is more clearly marked and prominently located than that of Fārisī. And although the two are not far from each other, they are by no means directly adjacent.}

\footnotetext[305]{al-Malik al-Kāmil Nāṣir al-Dīn Abū al-Ma‘ālī Muhammad. Born 573/1177 or 576/1180, he is the eldest son of al-‘Ādil Abū Bakr ibn Ayyūb. Fārisī was likely on close terms with the latter too. Gottschalk, H.L., “al-Malik al-Kāmil”, \textit{Encyclopédie de l’Islam}.}

\footnotetext[306]{Also known as the 5th Crusade (615-618/1218-1221), the objective of this expedition was to capture the port city of Damietta as a first step towards conquering Egypt and thus indirectly cementing the Christian possession of the Holy Land. Led by Jean de Brienne, King of Jerusalem, the Crusaders laid siege to Damietta for several months and eventually sacked the city. They were ultimately defeated by al-Kāmil’s forces. Ibn Abī Zar', \textit{Dhakhīrah}, pp. 53-5. Makīn, \textit{Chronique des Ayyoubides}, pp. 31-2. Becker EI1, “Damietta”.}

\end{footnotes}
Kawākib al-sayyārah where a passing allusion is made to Fārisī’s “famous story” (qisṣah mash ’hūrah) with al-Kāmil and an unnamed Christian monk (rāhib).308

Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qurṭubī309 (d. 631/1233)

Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar al-Qurṭūbī—not to be confused with the more famous exegete of the following generation310—taught tafsīr to Ḥarrālī in Madīnah and appears to be an especially important figure in relation to him, if only because he is the sole mentor figure whom Ḥarrālī explicitly mentions in his corpus. Certain elements of Qurṭūbī’s early biography echo those of Ḥarrālī. Qurṭūbī was born and raised in the Maghrib, but emigrated to the Mashriq early in life and never returned. Qurṭūbī’s father had fled from the political tumult of Cordoba and settled in Fez. Shortly before leaving the Maghrib, Qurṭūbī reportedly studied in Sabtah under the legist,

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308 Of the monk alluded to in Ibn al-Zayyāt, Tolan offers the following critique of Massignon’s interpretation: “Pour Massignon, ce rāhib ne peut être que François [d’Assise], même si d’autres candidats ne manquent pas: par exemple, le patriarche copte d’Alexandrie qui participa à un débat avec des érudit musulmans qu’al-Kāmil présida en 1221, ou peut-être le copte mis à mort pour blasphème au Caire en 1209.” Tolan, Le Saint chez le Sultan, La rencontre de François d’Assise et de l’islam: Huit siècles d’interprétation, p. 455. See also Fārisī’s notice in Ibn al-Zayyāt, al-Kawākib al-Sayyārah, pp. 108-10.


310 Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr ibn Farḥ al-Anṣārī al-Qurṭūbī (d. 671/1273) author of the Qur’ān commentary al-‘Iqd al-thamīn. Another near-contemporaneous figure bearing the same nisbah is Abī Ḥāmid ibn ‘Umar al-Qurṭūbī (d. 656/1258) author of al-mufhim fī sharh talkhīṣ Muslim.
traditionist and ascetic Ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh al-Ḥijarī (d. 591/1195), one of Abū al-Ṣabr al-Fihrī’s mentors.

Early in his career in the Mashriq, Qurṭūbī was the student of the eminent Qur’ānic scholar al-Qāsim ibn Ferro al-Shāṭibī311 (d. 590/1194), learning from him his two seminal, didactic poems on Qur’ān reading (qirā’ah), the lāmiyyah and the rā’īyah. On the latter poem in particular, Qurṭūbī was reportedly one of only two who heard the full version.312 After the death of Shāṭībī, Qurṭūbī took over his teaching duties at the Fāḍilīyah madrasah in Cairo. During this time, Qurṭūbī apparently devoted most of his time to the teaching of Qur’ān reading (qirā’āt) and ḥadīth. He was also a competent grammarian who engaged in debates over the intricacies in the work of Sibawayh.

In later years, Qurṭūbī turned increasingly to asceticism. While still in Cairo (Fusṭāṭ) he became a major disciple of Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qurashī313 (d. 599/1203), an Andalusian-born

311 Abū al-Qāsim ibn Ferro (variants: Firruh, Farruḥ) ibn Khalaf ibn ʿAḥmad al-Ruʿaynī. His major contribution was the introduction of didactic mnémotechniques in the discipline of Qur’ān reading (qirāʾah). He was born in 538/1144 at in Spanish city of Shāṭibah (Játiva), where he studied qirāʾāt under ʿAli ibn Muḥammad ibn Hudhayl in Valencia. Later he attended the ḥadīth lectures of al-Silafī in Alexandria, before settling in Cairo in 572/1175. He was appointed by al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil as the head instructor of qirāʾāt, grammar, and language at the recently-founded al-Fāḍilīyah madrasah. By far his more widely popular works and those on which numerous commentaries have been written are his didactic poems, especially al-Rāʾīyah on Qur’ānic orthography and al-Lāmiyyah (var. al-Shāṭibīyah) on the seven variant Qur’ān readings. The latter poem remained central to teaching Qirāʾāt until modern times and was one of the sources of the 1924 Cairo edition of the Qurʾān. It also appears to be the only edited work of Shāṭibī. Qastallānī, Tarjamat al-Imām al-Shāṭibī. Yāqūt, Irshād, vol. 5, pp. 2216-7, nr. 907. Ṣafāḍī, al-Wāfi, vol. 24, pp. 108-9, nr. 42. Ibn al-ʿImād, Shadharāt al-dhahab, vol. 6, pp. 494-5. Dhahabī, Siyar, vol. 21, pp. 261-4, nr. 136. Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt, vol. 4, pp. 71-3, nr. 537. Angelika Neuwirth, EI2, “al-Shāṭibī”, with additional references.


313 Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ṭūrāb ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥāshimī al-Qurashī. An Algeciras native was born there circa 544/1150, not much is known about the identity of his first Andalusian teachers. Certain sources indicate that he was the disciple of Abū Madyan. During his time in Cairo (Fusṭāṭ) he was famous
Shaykh who was influenced early on by the Almerian school of tasawwuf then went on to spend the better part of his career in Egypt. Due to the saturation of Sufi figures during this era, Qurashī’s distinct spiritual footprint is not easily discerned. As Gril suggests, Qurashī’s spiritual legacy—human as well as doctrinal—seems to have dissolved beyond recognition (“se fondit”) within that of more iconic figures like Abū Madyan and Shādhīlī.


(ukhuwwah). Both settled in the Ḥijāz after their master passed away. For a time, Qurṭubī was the imām of the Prophet’s mosque in Madīnah. While in the Ḥijāz, Qurṭubī maintained relations with Egyptian Sufi networks, including the Qéna-based sons of Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh315 (d. 612/1215) and the disciples of ‘Abd al-Razzāq316 (d. ca. 1199) in Alexandria. One source notes that Qurṭubī was also in contact with one Abū al-Ḥasan al-Wāṣiti317, a principal disciple of Shiḥāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī. It is interesting that biographers like Dhahabī, who praise Qurṭubī for his knowledge of Qur’ān reading and ḥadīth, as well as for his asceticism and virtue (the word ṣāliḥ is often used), do not mention, or are not aware of, his involvement in tasawwuf. The vast majority of Qurṭūbī’s notices do not contain any mention of Qurashī or Qaṣṭallānī. The richest (and almost sole) source for Qurṭubī’s life as a Sufi is Ibn Ẓāfir’s (fl. 13th century) Risālah.

Qurṭubī was also apparently a charismatic and widely beloved figure, popular among both “elites” (al-khāṣṣah) and “commoners” (al-‘āmmah).318 During his Egypt years, Qurṭubī had been a close confidant of al-‘Ādil I (r. 1200-1218), the Ayyūbid Sultan of Egypt and brother of Salāḥ al-Dīn. The same level of comradery did not carry over to his son al-Kāmil (r. 1218-1238), though apparently the latter still held a deep respect for Qurṭubī. In an anecdote related by Ibn Ẓāfir, Qurṭubī was ordered by the Prophet in a dream to travel from Madīna to Cairo and deliver a special message Sultan al-Kāmil. Full of humility and respect, the Sultān came to meet

315 Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Ḥumayd Ibn al-Sabbāgh al-Qūṣi. A Sufi Shaykh were formed many disciples. See Ibn Ẓāfir, Risālah, p. 217 with additional references.


317 Ibn Ẓāfir, Risālah, p. 128. Not much is known about this figure other than that he also goes by the laqab al-Naqqāš.

Qurṭubī by foot at a spot south of Fusṭāṭ. After delivering the message, Qurṭubī made his way back to Madīnah, while the Sultan is said to have promptly carried out the unspecified directives of the message. Ibn Ṣafir cites this episode not just as a mark of Qurṭubī’s sanctity but also as a testament to the submission of the Sultan to his spiritual authority. The anecdote fits into a larger pattern of Sufis seemingly having an outsize influence on the political life of Ayyūbid Egypt.319

Another area in which most biographers recognize Qurṭubī’s mastery is scriptural hermeneutics (ṭawīl al-bā‘ fī al-tafsīr). Qurṭubī’s insights into the Qur’an are praised by Ḥarralī in the introduction to his Miftāḥ, where in the introduction he writes:

> Among those whom God has firmly established in the way of the science of tafsīr and ta‘wīl, and for whom [God] thereafter opened a door to a share of [scriptural] comprehension (fataḥa ‘alayhi ḥāzzan min al-taṭarruq lil-fahm), because of God’s purification of him through asceticism, and for his having knocked on God’s door for twenty years—is the shaykh, the imām, the ‘ālim of Madīnah of his time, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar al-Qurṭubī. May God sanctify his soul (qaddasa Allāh rūḥah).320

In Ḥarralī’s entire extant corpus, Qurṭubī is the only teacher who is invoked by name. Ḥarralī’s education under Qurṭubī occurred in Madīnah probably around 1225. The final expression in the above quote suggest that Ḥarralī composed the Miftāḥ after his master’s death in 631/1233. Describing his educational experience under Qurṭubī, Ḥarralī writes:

> Among that which God facilitated [for us], was seeing [Qurṭubī] (ru‘yatuhu)321, reading [the Qur’an] at his feet, and arriving at a deep understanding (tafahhumunā) of the fātiḥah over the course of four months. [Qurṭubī] would articulate axioms that grant access to a deep understanding [of the Qur’an], axioms which are to Qur’ān-comprehension what usūl al-fiqh are to aḥkām-comprehension (tanzilu fī fahm al-qur’ān manzilat usūl al-fiqh fī tafahhum al-aḥkām).322

319 Ibn Ṣafir, Risālah, pp. 69-70, p. 127.

320 Kh. 1997, p. 27.

321 The term ru‘yah in this context probably also implies perceiving and benefiting from the spiritual state of a Shaykh.

322 Kh. 1997, p. 28.
That the study of the fātiḥah alone took four months—and in some accounts this period is longer—tells us that Qurṭubī’s approach to the Qur’ān was thoroughgoing one, encompassing not only all the technical aspects, like variant readings for example, but also some deeper, totalizing paradigm. Ḥarrālī’s reference to a set of bedrock principles is also suggestive. Although the Miftāḥ never uses the expression usūl al-tafsīr, the above passage is one of the earliest and clearest formulations of that idea. Certainly, it is a concept which the Ḥarrālī attempts to implement in his treatise and constitutes one of the Miftāḥ’s main points of academic interest. To the extent that this paradigm was received from Qurṭubī, clearly our author stands indebted to him. The problem, however, is that after this initial acknowledgement of Qurṭubī in the introduction, Ḥarrālī does not refer to him again in the main body of the treatise, meaning that its impossible to know specifically what principles of tafsīr methodology were inherited from Qurṭubī, and how Ḥarrālī is applying, expanding, or modifying them.

A further problem is that Qurṭubī is not known to have authored any works of his own. Nor, as far as I am aware, did Qurṭūbī have any other students besides Ḥarrālī who went on to compose works on tafsīr. In fact, it is unclear from which direction Qurṭubī himself acquired his knowledge of tafsīr. While there is some evidence that his two main mentors Shāṭībī and Qurashī authored works of tafsīr, their contributions in this field seem to have been minor and

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323 In Ghubrīnī’s ‘Unwān (p. 144) this period is said to have been six months. In Ibn Tawwāḥ’s Sabl al-Maqāl (p. 98) Ḥarrālī’s disciple and servant (khādim) reports his master as saying: “At the feet of Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qurṭūbī, I studied the Fātiḥah and one ḥizb of the Qurʾān in Maḏīnah for seven months.”.

324 Besides Ḥarrālī, the most prolific author among Qurṭūbī’s students is probably Quṭb al-Dīn al-Qastallānī (d. 1288), son of Qurṭūbī’s co-disciple Ahmad al-Qastallānī. Quṭb al-Dīn reportedly studied Qurʾānic reading (qara’ā ʿalayhi khatmatan wāḥidah) and ḥadīth with Qurṭūbī in Maḏīnah. Quṭb al-Dīn has a number of extant and edited works but none appear to be on tafsīr proper. See Sha’rānī, al-Ṭabaqāt al-wuṣṭā, vol. 1, p. 535, nr. 278. Fāsī, ‘Iqd, vol. 2, p. 238. Ḥaddād, Riḥlat Ibn Rushayd, pp. 366-7, nr. 166.
not widely diffused. On the other hand, Qurṭubī’s spiritual master Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Qurashī is credited with a work titled Jawāhir al-balāghah fi al-maʾānī wa-al-bayān, which could yet represent one of the sources of Ḥarrālī’s (at times) balāghah-inspired approach to the Qurʾān.

It is also significant that, immediately following the above passage, Ḥarrālī claims that he himself received divinely-inspired insights into the meaning of the Qurʾān:

Then God bestowed blessings and gifts (thumma manna Allāh subḥānahu bi-barakāt wa-mawāhib lā tuḥṣā) of “what no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human heart has conceived”. We therefore asked God to inspire us principles (fa-istakharnā Allāh subḥānahu fī ifādati qawānīn) specializing in gaining access to a comprehension of the Qurʾān (takhtaṣṣ bi-al-taṭarruq ilā tafahhum al-Qurʾān), by which one would be made alert (with the help of God and aid from Him) to [the Qurʾān’s] superior expressiveness (yutanabbahu bi-hā ilā ‘alīyi al-bayān), and which would constitute a key to the lock of the closed door of contemplating the revealed Qurʾān (yakūn miftāḥ li-ghalaq al-bāb al-muqfal ‘alā tadabbur al-Qurʾān al-munzal). Do they not contemplate the Quran? Or do hearts have their locks upon them? (47:23) (Kh. 97, p. 28)

Underneath Ḥarrālī’s display of humility—acknowledging his intellectual indebtedness to Qurṭubī, and his gratitude for the divine aid that guided his own exegetical deliberations—the above passage at the same time asserts a degree of authorial independence. The relevant emphasis in this passage is on the personal and unique nature of the divine inspiration (“what no eye has seen”) and the fact that this inspiration occurred separately from, or at least chronologically subsequent to (thumma), his lessons with Qurṭubī. What Ḥarrālī is saying is that Qurṭubī’s teachings were precious seeds which were internalized and fused with even greater,

325 Shāṭibī (Qurṭubī’s qirāʾ teacher) seems to have written some works on tafsīr (Brockelmann, I2 pp. 521-2, S1, pp. 725-6). But these works remain in MS. and their influence in the tradition appears miniscule compared to his didactic poems on Qurʾānic reading. Still, these manuscripts might be worth investigating to see whether Shāṭibī’s exegetical ideas were passed on to Qurṭubī and Ḥarrālī.

326 Brockelmann, I, p. 567; S1, p. 833.

327 There seems to be a missing or an implicit ‘alayya or ‘alaynā in this sentence. This might be related to Ḥarrālī’s tendency to show humility and self-effacement. Throughout Ḥarrālī’s extant corpus I have only come across a handful of instances where he uses the first person.
divinely-inspired knowledge, resulting in an original work that is not just a compilation of class notes.

**Spiritual Disciples of Ḥarrālī**

In addition to students of the religious sciences, Ḥarrālī also had spiritual disciples, even at such an apparently early stage of his career. One of Ḥarrālī’s closest disciples (min bāṭinat al-Ḥarrālī) was Abū Zakariyyā’ Ibn Mahjūbah al-Ṣaṭīfī\(^{328}\) (d. 677/1279). Ghubrīnī tells us that Ibn Mahjūbah travelled to the East in search of spiritual masters, and indeed encountered many *shuyūkh*. But when he met Ḥarrālī in Egypt, Ibn Mahjūbah devoted himself exclusively to him, studying both the exoteric and esoteric sciences. While under Ḥarrālī’s care, Ibn Mahjūbah reportedly attained a degree of spiritual realization (*zahara la-hu ba’d al-taḥqīq*). Commenting on his disciple’s mystical breakthrough, Ḥarrālī sings a poem in which Reality takes the form of feminine beauty and which opens with the lines:

> From her pleated veil Laylá has revealed to you (*jalat laka laylá min mathná niqābihā*)
> a way, disclosed a flash of her beauty (*ṭarīqan wa-abdat lam’atan min jamālihā*)

Ibn Mahjūbah reportedly accompanied Ḥarrālī for an extended period of time in Egypt. But, Ghubrīnī’s account of the time which master and disciple spent in Egypt is vague. It does, however, raise some interesting points. For instance, according to the *ʿUnwān*, Ḥarrālī reportedly had associates or disciples (*aṣḥāb*) in Egypt who were already very advanced on the spiritual path (*adrakū al-madārik wa-jāwazū sabīl al-sālik*). But if Ḥarrālī was so deeply connected to Egyptian Sufi circles, it is somewhat curious that neither he nor any of his disciples are

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mentioned in Ibn Ẓāfir’s Risālah, which is one of the richest sources for the early 13th century Sufi milieu in Egypt and which contains notices of other known associates of Ḥarrālī in the Mashriq, like al-Fakhr al-Fārisī and Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qurṭubī.329

Ibn Mahjūbah presumably moved with Ḥarrālī from Egypt to Bijāyah. However, when his master was later ejected from the city and forced to travel to the East once again, Ibn Mahjūbah appears to have stayed behind, living out the remainder of his life in Bijāyah. In the years after Ḥarrālī’s departure, Ibn Mahjūbah would associate with the influential uṣūlī and traditionist Ibn Abī Naṣr330 (d. 652/1254) as well as with some of Ḥarrālī’s other students from Bijāyah.

Ibn Mahjūbah went on to become a Sufi master in his own right. Ghubrīnī counts him among his shuyūkh, describing him as al-walīy al-ṣālih al-mubārak. In his barnāmaj, Ghubrīnī lists Ibn Mahjūbah as one of four figures who transmit to him ‘ilm al-taṣawwuf.331 According to Ghubrīnī, one of the marks of Ibn Mahjūbah’s pious virtue was that during Abū Yaḥyā’s (d. 646/1248-9) governorship of the city of Bijāyah, he was offered a post with a fixed monthly stipend to be recorded in the account books of the treasury (al-dīwān). Ibn Mahjūbah turned it down, saying: “My name is in the dīwān of absolute existence (dīwān al-wujūd al-muṭlaq) therefore I must not place it in the written-down and contingent dīwān of creation (dīwān al-

329 Ibn Ẓāfir’s Risālah may be a rich source of information on 13th century Sufi circles in Egypt, but it is not an exhaustive one. As Grill notes, there are some notable omissions. Most notably, for example, it does not mention Sufi poet ‘Umar Ibn al-Fārid (d. 632/1235). The Risālah also provides comparatively little information on the khānaqāh milieus of Cairo. As far as Ḥarrālī is concerned, however, it is still possible that he does actually feature in the Risālah—in the form of one of the unknown figures mentioned in the work like “Abū al-Hasan al-Kindī”. See Ibn Ẓāfir, Risālah, pp. 78, 176-7.

330 This figure is discussed in more detail in the next chapter on Bijāyah.

331 Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 359. The precise significance of Ghubrīnī’s different Sufi chains of transmission remains unclear. This topic is addressed in more detail in chapter six “Ḥarrālī and Abū Madyan”.

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Ghubrīnī also attributes to Ibn Mahjūbah a modest corpus, including a commentary on the divine names, several short pieces (taqāyīd) on tašawwuf, and some poetry. Apart from the few lines of poetry preserved in the ‘Unwān, Ibn Mahjūbah’s writings appear lost.

Another one of Ḥarrālī’s spiritual disciples is Ibn ‘Abd al-Sayyid al-Ṭarābulsī, a figure about whom very little is known. However, according to Ghubrīnī, Ibn ‘Abd al-Sayyid was designated by Ḥarrālī as one of only a handful of special disciples whose supplication is granted by God (tustajāb da’watuhum); the aforementioned Ibn Mahjūbah is also included in this elite group. Thus, it is likely that the figure of Ibn ‘Abd al-Sayyid was an early spiritual disciple of Ḥarrālī who may have attached himself to the latter in Tripoli (Ṭarābulus), his native city where he appears to have remained for most if not all of his life. Ibn ‘Abd al-Sayyid’s main claim to fame is that he is the primary witness and transmitter of a couple of lines of poetry by Ḥarrālī.

One morning, after inquiring about his master’s state (kayfa ašbahta?), the disciple received the following versified response:

I have come [to a state] finer than the bitter breeze blowing (ašbaḥtu al-ṭāf min murri al-nasīmi sarā)
Over the meadow, the imagination nearabout pains me (‘alā al-riyādī yakādu al-wahmu yu’limūnī)
From every gentle essence I recoil, stricken (min kulli ma’nā/ma’nan laṭīfin aḥtasī)

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332 According to ‘Āmirī, these references to wujūd muṭlaq/muqayyad are an indication that Ibn Mahjūbah was influenced by Ibn Sab‘īn. ‘Āmirī, Ṭašawwuf, p. 143.


334 The fact that in the ‘Unwān, Ghubrīnī only mentions Ibn ‘Abd al-Sayyid in passing suggests that he did not accompany Ḥarrālī to Bijāyah. In addition, several decades later, the itinerant scholar Ibn Rushayd mentions that Ibn ‘Abd al-Sayyid hosted him in Ṭarābulus. Ibn Rushayd, Mil’ al-‘aybah, vol. 6, pt. 1, p. 21.
And every intelligible in the cosmos quickens me (wa-kullu nāṭiqātīn fī al-kawnī tuṭribūnī)

The sentiment underlining these lines is clearly one of intensely-felt rapture, perhaps uttered under the influence of a spiritual state (ḥāl). Supposing that Ḥarrālī sang these lines in Ṭarābulus, during his second passage through the city and after having recently experienced a spiritual breakthrough (fa‘āl), this may have something to do the disapproving reaction of Ibn Abī al-Dunyā, his more exoterically-minded pupil. There are a few other lines of mystical poetry attributed to Ḥarrālī that suggest he may have been prone on occasion to a kind of “inebriation”. In the main, however, Ḥarrālī was not a prolific mystical poet. All in all, perhaps no more than a hundred lines of poetry can be attributed to Ḥarrālī. Significantly, this poetry is scattered throughout his biographies. Not once in his extant corpus does Ḥarrālī cite poetry, whether it be his own or someone else’s; nor for that matter does he engage in rhymed prose. Thus, this “ecstatic” side of Ḥarrālī’s mystical persona should not be emphasized at the expense of the predominantly “sober” mode that comes through in his systematic and cerebral corpus.

As for the concept of nutq, it would be inaccurate to render it here as “reason” in some possibly Ash‘arite sense. What Ḥarrālī is alluding to here is the preternatural cognizance of the “articulation” or “speech” of otherwise mute elements of the corporeal world, a penetrating awareness of the metaphysical transparency of phenomena. This notion has its roots in the sunnah: the Prophet was reportedly “spoken to” by a lizard (ḍabb) and was able to comprehend the “articulation” of a trunk of a palm tree (jadh‘ al-nakhlah). In the Islamic tradition this ability of the Prophet has been cited as one of his secondary miracles.335 The Sufi tradition would go further by holding that certain exceptional individuals in the Muslim community can continue to “inherit” such abilities from the Prophet. Ḥarrālī would probably count himself among such

335 Including, incidentally, in Salaljī’s theology manual, the Burhānīyah. Salāljī, Burhānīyah, p. 120.
gifted individuals, given that he regularly invokes the notion in his writings. For instance, in one of his aphorisms (ḥikam) he observes that:

Animals are the ambulatory letters of the God (ḥurūf Allāh al-mutaḥarrikah) and inanimate objects are His stationary (sākinah) letters. All represent God’s speech (kalām) to His servants and are a form of remembrance (dhikr). As [God] says: **those whose eyes were veiled from the remembrance of Me…** (SQ 18:101).

A more abstract and scholastic extension of the theme of nuṭq are Ḥarrālī’s treatises on the science of letters, in which each letter of the Arabic alphabet articulates of a metaphysical principle or cosmic dynamic. One may therefore intuit the divine symbologies in the “book” of nature just as one can intuit the symbologies latent in the revealed “book” of the Qur’ān.

The above couplet is one of the few mystical utterances by Ḥarrālī to have been absorbed and propagated to some extent in later Sufi lore. The lines are cited, for example, by the Maghribī biographers Ibn al-Qāḍī (d. 1616) and Maqqarī (d. 1632) both of whom were sympathetic to taṣawwuf and whose works, Jadhwat al-iqtibās and Naḍh al-ṭib, respectively, are quite well known. Interestingly enough, in the Jadhwah the above couplet is cited not in Ḥarrālī’s own dedicated notice—apparently Ibn al-Qāḍī did not have enough biographical information to warrant one—but rather in that of Ibn ‘Arabī. The main justification for this is that Ibn ‘Arabī allegedly responded to Ḥarrālī’s couplet with a line of his own:

And for every enunciation of an intelligible I [receive] an inebriation (wa-li kulli nuṭqi nāṭiqin lī sakrah)

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From He by Whom inebriations are summated (*min dhāl-adhī yuḥsā bi-hi [al-]sakarāt*)

Tantalizing though they may be, the connections between Ḥarrālī and Ibn ‘Arabī that are documented in the biographical literature are very few and far between. The circumstances surrounding this particular exchange are completely unknown. Was there a running correspondence between the two? Did they physically meet on this occasion? Neither features in the other’s writings. The biographical literature records only a single physical meeting between the two, one that occurs in Damascus at the very end of their respective careers. Perhaps at minimum we can say is that Ḥarrālī’s short poem and Ibn ‘Arabī’s even shorter response suggest that the two are in some ways on the same page, exploring similar mystical landscapes. Ibn ‘Arabī seems to have immediately intuited what Ḥarrālī meant by the articulation of intelligible (*nutq*). At the same time, Ibn ‘Arabī appears to be pointing to a higher and more comprehensive level of spiritual insight.

Still, the fact that Ibn ‘Arabī reacted to the spiritual insights of someone who was perhaps ten or twenty years his junior—and who was by no accounts his disciple—is in itself at least thought-provoking. And when we take into account other information cited in this chapter—Ḥarrālī’s claim of having received a *fath*, the fact that spiritual disciples are adhering to him—it suggests that at some point during his first sojourn in the Mashriq, Ḥarrālī came into his own as a fully-fledged spiritual master.

One final confirmation of this comes to us from a rather unexpected source: Ibn al-Mustawfi’s (d. 637/1239) *Tārīkh Irbil*. Although there is no indication that Ḥarrālī ever set foot in Irbil, the work contains a biographical notice for a certain Abū ‘Ali al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad
al-Andalūsī\textsuperscript{338} (d. after 627/1230) who arrives in Irbil in 627/1230 as an informal emissary soliciting the financial aid of the local ruler, Muẓaffar al-Dīn al-Kūkbūrī\textsuperscript{339} (549-630/1154-1233), to help ransom Muslims taken captive during the recent Christian conquest of Majorca. Kūkbūrī allegedly agreed to help. Though we are given few other details, both about the outcome of the mission nor about Abū ‘Alī himself, whose notice contains meagre biographical information. The notice contains mostly poetry by Abū ‘Alī that is not directly related to his mission and which Ibn al-Mustawfī seems to have recorded out of sheer literary interest. But a few lines of the poetry cited in Abū ‘Alī’s notice, however, are attributed to Ḥarrālī. The deferential manner in which Abū ‘Alī introduces Ḥarrālī name is worth noting:

“The grand master (\textit{al-imām}), the apprehender [of divine reality] (\textit{al-muḥaqiq}), the last of the [righteous] forbearers (\textit{baqīyat al-salaf}), Fakhr al-Dīn…al-Ḥarrālī—has sung to us for himself (\textit{anshadanā li-nafsihi}) in Cairo (\textit{bi-maḥrūsat al-Qāhirah}) on the subject of a black bondmaid of his (\textit{fī jāriyatin la-hu sawdā’}) by the name of Rashīqah: …

The lines that follow do indeed appear to be a straightforward love poem addressed to a real person named Rashīqah, with no apparent mystical sous-entendre. Ḥarrālī’s apparent affection for Rashīqah contrasts with the abuse he would later endure at the hands of a wife named Karīmah. But the prime historical significance of Ḥarrālī’s mention in \textit{Tārikh Irbil} is that, based on its author’s death date (637/1239), it constitutes the earliest known mention of Ḥarrālī in any literature. In addition, Ibn al-Mustawfī states that he interviewed Abū ‘Alī al-Andalūsī the same


\textsuperscript{339} Abū Saʿīd Muẓaffar al-Dīn b. ‘Ali b. Begtegīn al-Kūkbūrī (var. Kökbüri), the most famous ruler of the Kurdish Begtegīnid dynasty whose capital was Irbil. He was a brother-in-law and a faithful vassal of Saladin. In Irbil, Kökbüri hosted great yearly festivals including a ceremony for the birthday of the Prophet. He appears to have looked favorably on Sufis as he built a \textit{ribāṭ} for them in Irbil. Ibn al-Mustawfī prefaces Kökbüri’s name with the expression \textit{al-faqīr ilā Allāh}. See M. Streck, EI1, “Irbil” and K. V. Zetterstéen, EI1, “Kökbüri”.

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year that he arrived in Irbil (627/1230). Abū ‘Alī’s testimony suggests that sometime prior to 627/1230, Ḥarrālī came to be regarded as an eminent spiritual master. It is also a testament to his initial impact in the East that Ḥarrālī had been assigned the typically Mashriqi laqab of “Fakhr al-Dīn”, which none of his Maghrībi biographers employ. It is worth pointing out that it is unlikely Ḥarrālī accompanied Abū ‘Alī to Irbil, for otherwise Ibn al-Mustawfī would surely have dedicated a separate notice to him. By 627/1230, Ḥarrālī had almost certainly settled in Bijāyah, or was at least in the process of journeying back to the Maghrib.
CHAPTER SIX: Bijāyah

Following his first voyage to the Mashriq, Ḥarrālī tracked back West. But rather than returning to his homeland in the Far Maghrib, he elected to settle in the city of Bijāyah (Béjaïa, Bougie) in the Eastern region of modern-day Algeria. Based on chronological facts considered in the previous chapter, it is reasonably safe to assume that Ḥarrālī arrived in the city probably sometime soon after 628/1230, that is, shortly after Bijāyah’s incorporation into Abū Zakariyā’ al-Ḥafṣī’s realm. He would depart, again for the East, around 1235.

This period of Ḥarrālī’s life is also the most richly documented, thanks mainly to the biographical work ‘Unwān al-dirāyah fī-man ‘urīfā min al-‘ulamā’ fī al-mi’ah al-sābi’ah bi-Bijāyah (The emblem of knowledge regarding the well-known scholars of the seventh century in Bijāyah), written by the jurist, qāḍī, and Bijāyah native Abū al-‘Abbās al-Ghubrīnī (d. 714/1314). Ḥarrālī is memorialized in the ‘Unwān as one of the intellectual and spiritual luminaries of 13th century Bijāyah. The comparatively detailed and anecdote-rich biography of Ḥarrālī supplied in the ‘Unwān testifies to the deep mark that Ḥarrālī left on Bijāyan milieu. It also suggests that, while it lasted, Ḥarrālī’s sojourn in the city may have been one of the most stable and productive periods in his otherwise highly itinerant career.
The Political and Religious Context

Why Ḥarrālī specifically chose to settle in Bijāyah is not clear, though considering the strategic position of this city, it was by no means an illogical choice if his intentions were to disseminate his teachings. By the early 13th century, this city of around 50,000 inhabitants was the most important urban center in the central Maghrib. Bijāyah was an almost obligatory point of passage along the shipping route connecting the western and eastern Muslim Mediterranean. Most Ḥajj pilgrims stopped there, for example, and it was also a destination for a large number of refugees fleeing political upheaval in Spain.340

Prior to the Almohad period, Bijāyah had long served as Mediterranean seaport for the Śanhājah Berber city-state of Qal‘at Banī Ḥammād, situated in the mountainous interior to the south. After the Almohads destroyed Qal‘at Banī Ḥammād, many of refugees settled in Bijāyah. Around the year 547/1152, Bijāyah was itself captured by the first Almohad caliph, ‘Abd al-Mu‘min, following a meticulously planned military campaign. The timber and iron-rich interior meant that the city was used as a naval arsenal for the Almohads’ Mediterranean fleet. The strategic importance of the city and its surrounding region was such that it was assigned a separate governorship independent from that of Tunis. In Bijāyah, gubernatorial duties were assigned to only eminent members of the caliphal family. The Almohad surrogate regime in the region was known as the Banū ‘Abd al-Mu‘min.341

At the time of the Almohad conquest, the vast majority of the Ibrīqiya populace adhered to the Mālikī school of law, a deeply entrenched institution which had surmounted and outlived various challenges over the ages, including Fāṭimid Shī‘ism. Almohad unitarian ideology does

341 Valérain, Bougie, pp. 48-50.
not seem to have clashed with local orthodoxy as dramatically as it did in other regions of the Maghrib and Andalusia. One rather cosmetic change the Almohads managed to impose in Ifrīqiyya and the Eastern Maghrib was the mention of the name of Ibn Tūmart during Friday sermons. However, such innovations (*bid’ah*) were generally not felt to be as intolerable as those that had been imposed by the Fāṭimids, and so, for as long as the Almohads were politically ascendant, they were more or less accepted by the ‘*ulamā*’ of Ifrīqiyya.

Tensions between Marrakesh and Bijāyān ‘*ulamā*’ in particular came to a head for a brief period during the reign of caliph al-Manṣūr (r. 580-95/1184-99). The Banū Ghānīyah rebels, remnants of the former Almoravid elite, struck out from their base in Majorca and managed to capture Bijāyān for a brief period. After the Almohads recaptured the city, the state heavy-handedly tried to reimpose a more puritan form of Almohad creed. Barring this episode, however, this peripheral province of the empire generally enjoyed a fair degree of religious autonomy through most of the Almohad period.342

After the defeat to the Christians in the battle of al-‘Iqāb (609/1212), the Almohad dynasty slid into a long period of decline. This slide was even more evident in the empire’s outer extremities. In Ifrīqiyya, the final straw came in 625/1227-8 when, amid a chaotic dynastic struggle, the Almohad caliph al-Ma’mūn (r. 624-630/1226-1232) formally renounced the old Tumartian doctrines.343 The governor of Tunis Abū Zakariyya’ Yaḥyā344 (d. 647/1249-50) reacted

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343 al-Ma’mūn also executed a number of Almohad shaykhs, some of whom were of the same Hintāṭī Berber stock as the Ḥafṣids. Rouighi, Emirate, p. 32.

by declaring independence from the Mu’minids, thereby founding the Ḥafṣid dynasty. A
descendant of Abū Ḥafṣ—one of Ibn Tumart’s first companions—Abū Zakariyā’ officially re-
affirmed his adherence to the Mahdī’s original doctrines. One of the first edicts he issued
directed the khuttāb of Ifrīqiyya to omit the name of al-Ma’mūn from all public sermons and to
invoke instead that of the Mahdī and the four rightly-guided Caliphs. Although constituting an
important basis for their legitimacy early on, the Ḥafṣidadh’s adherence to Almohad doctrine
remained in many ways symbolic and wore off with the passage of time.345

Abū Zakariyya brought most of the greater Ifrīqiyya region under Ḥafṣid control by 1230.
Bijāyah was incorporated into his growing domain with minimal bloodshed in 626/1228-9.346 In
633/1235-6 the amīr’s eldest son Abū Yaḥyā was installed as governor of Bijāyah and its
surrounding region.347 A few years later in 638/1240-1 this son was formally designated as the
Ḥafṣid heir. In the event, he never lived to succeed his father on the throne of Tunis. Upon his
death in 646/1248-9, Abū Zakariyya’ nominated another son in his place, Abū ‘Abd Allāh
Muḥammad, who would later be given the laqab al-Mustanṣir348 (d. 675/1276-7).

**Harrāli’s Apolitical Posture**

During al-Mustanṣir’s long reign, a few of Ḥarrāli’s students, the fiqh specialists in
particular, rose to various positions of prominence. Other students preferred to steer clear of


346 Valérian, *Bougie*, p. 54. Some give the year of Bijāyah’s capture as 1230. See for example


348 Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Mustanṣir. Succeeded his father in 647/1249-50 and reigned until his
billah. His death marks a high point of Ḥafṣid political hegemony. Ibn Qunfudh, *al-Fārisiyah fi mabādi’
overtly political roles but continued to be active in different ways within the scholarly community. Such an apolitical posture is one which Ḥarrālī himself appears to have adopted. The uncertainty here is due to the fact the sources provide us with a rather incomplete picture of Ḥarrālī’s socio-political actions over the course of his sojourn in Bijāyah: the ‘Unwān limits itself to the description of interactions largely between Ḥarrālī and figures from within his own circle of students.

Another complicating factor is that, by his own admission, Ghubrīnī is loathe to air out the intellectual community’s dirty laundry and generally takes an irenic approach to historiography. As Urvoy has also observed, Ghubrīnī appears to gloss over many of the tensions and doctrinal polemics that one normally finds in the Islamic intellectual sphere between, for instance, *sharīʿah*-minded legists and Sūfis, traditionalist scripturalists and rational philosophers.349 One poignant example of this is Ghubrīnī’s failure to mention Ḥarrālī’s tutelage of Ibn Abī al-Dunyā, probably because of the controversy and the scandal surrounding it.350 Ghubrīnī also tends to downplay or even omit completely the political persecution suffered by religious scholars of any stripe. For example, after describing a contentious episode between the governor of Bijāyah and Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Uṣūlī (d. 612/1215), a headstrong rationalist and associate of Ibn Rushd, Ghubrīnī expresses his regret at having to report such hard truths, since to do so in his view is to promote ill will and mistrust:

349 On Ghubrīnī’s conciliatory-mindedness, see also the comments in Urvoy, *Structuration*, p. 92, 94.

350 Ibn Abī al-Dunyā is the only figure who never lived in Bijāyah to be mentioned in Ghubrīnī’s Bijāyah-centered work. Ghubrīnī personally met Ibn Abī al-Dunyā in Tunis and includes him in the ‘Unwān because he has great respect for his knowledge as a ‘ālim, though not necessarily as a spiritual authority. Ghubrīnī’s silence on the relationship between Ibn Abī al-Dunyā and Ḥarrālī—even though Ghubrīnī is normally diligent in identifying Ḥarrālī’s students of Ifrīqiyan origin—is most likely a deliberate act of self-censorship in view of the relationship’s contentious nature.
I remain critical of those who cite the virtues of a man of knowledge but then connive against him (yaghmiz fi sha’nih) and point to that which is blameworthy in him. [For my part], I only wish to mention the good (fa-lā urd an adhkur illā al-khayr). For I only wish to repair relations, as far as I am able (in urd illā al-islāh mā istaṭa’).

The ‘Unwān remains an invaluable source of information—on 13th century Bijāyan intellectual history in general and on Ḥarrālī in particular. That being said, if there were tensions between Ḥarrālī and certain members of Bijāyah’s religious and political elite, it is likely that Ghubrīnī passed over at least some historically significant incidents in silence. In places, however, one can detect political undertones and social ramifications in certain anecdotes where Ghubrīnī may have not intended to express any. In Ḥarrālī’s case, one such anecdote documents an incident that occurred quite soon after his arrival in the city. Apparently, Ḥarrālī’s scholarly stature and spiritual authority were not immediately acknowledged by all Bijāyans. When he initially tried to teach at a particular mosque in Bijāyah—one which housed the shrine of the revered Sufi-faqīh Abū Zakariyā’ al-Zawāwī (d. 611/1215)—the muʿadhdhin of the mosque forbade him, stating:

“This is a respected place (hādhā mawḍ’i muḥtaram) and none can teach here save by express permission (lā yutakallam fīh illā ‘an amr).” Ḥarrālī replied: “The faqīh [Zawāwī] shall grant his permission and the seances will proceed God-willing (ya’dhin al-faqīh fi dhālik wa-yag’a al-kalām).” Then Ḥarrālī went over to the tomb of Abū Zakariyā’ [al-Zawāwī]...and prayed two prayer cycles, [then] sat facing the grave and began conversing (jalasa ‘inda qabrih al-mubārak wa-taḥaddath)...The next day when Ḥarrālī came to the mosque the muʿadhdhin stood up and greeted him. “Has the permission reached you (waṣalaka al-idhn)?” Ḥarrālī asked. He said: “Yes O esteemed faqīh, I have seen [Zawāwī] and he has told me “Our brother may speak (yatakallam akhūnā)”. And thus Ḥarrālī spoke at [Zawāwī’s] mosque by [Zawāwī’s] permission”.

No doubt, the original intent of the anecdote is to show Ḥarrālī in a positive light. In fact, this incident is explicitly presented as one of his several karāmāt, cleaving as it does to the

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351 Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 211.

352 More on this figure below.

353 Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, pp. 149-50. This anecdote was related to Ghubrīnī by Ibn Rabī’, one of Ḥarrālī’s star students in Bijāyah, who is discussed below.
familiar hagiographic trope of a saint’s knowledge being initially doubted but ultimately recognized. But the anecdote also begs several questions, including for instance, who was the unidentified *mu’adhdhin*? And why did he initially object to Ḣarrālī’s holding his seances in the mosque? Could Ḣarrālī have been regarded with suspicion in Bijāyah because of his (alleged) association with the Almohads and the caliph al-Manṣūr in particular? It is worth pointing out that, later on, Ḣarrālī was also active at another secondary mosque known as masjid al-Rayḥānah which at some point was also known as masjid al-Imām al-Mahdī354 because, almost a century prior, it hosted Ibn Tūmart, the spiritual founder of the Almohad movement. Unfortunately, the general lack of information, especially regarding Bijāyah’s medieval urban sites precludes the possibility of pursuing too deeply such lines of inquiry.355

The simplest and most likely explanation in my view is that the *mu’adhdhin* simply did not know who Ḣarrālī was. In other words, it’s not a question of what kind of reputation may have preceded Ḣarrālī, rather it’s that, as a newcomer to Bijāyah, he had no reputation at all. The *mu’adhdhin* incident, at the very least, should remind us that teachings chairs in the Eastern Maghrib’s most prestigious center of learning, would have been highly competitive, political affairs.356 This applies especially to posts at the city’s great mosque, the city’s most prominent educational institution. But teachings posts at other secondary locations around the city would

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355 There remains uncertainty about even the location of some of Bijāyah’s prominent urban landmarks, to say nothing of the subtle socio-political aura that may have historically been attached to the minor ones. And as far as Ḣarrālī is concerned, 1230 is only a vague estimate of the year of his arrival in Bijāyah. The timing of the Ḥaṣṣid takeover of Bijāyah in 626/1228–9 (which itself is not an absolute certainty) probably falls within the margin of error of the 1230 estimate of Ḣarrālī’s arrival in the city—which means that we don’t even know for sure what kind of political climate Ḣarrālī initially stepped into.

356 On this question see also Rouighi, *Emirate*, p. 128.
have been no small matter either. In the event, we know with reasonable certainty that Ḥarrālī continued to hold regular, well-attended teaching sessions until the end of his stay in Bijāyah. Some of these may have indeed taken place at Bijāyah’s great mosque.\footnote{Bijāyah’s great mosque appears to have been the site where Ḥarrālī engaged in a debate over an issue of Mālikī fiqh with an Andalusian legist named Laftanī. This incident is described in more detail below.} Thus, Ḥarrālī’s widely renowned activities as a scholar during his sojourn in Bijāyah, at whatever location it they may have taken place, would have presumably exposed him to at least occasional confrontations of a political bearing, beyond just the initial quarrel with the muʿadhdhin. It is these hypothetical incidents that Ghubrīnī has likely left out of the ‘Unwān.

**Harrālī’s Asceticism**

Ghubrīnī’s possible omission of some polemic episodes means that the biographical picture of Ḥarrālī’s career in Bijāyah may not be entirely complete, but this is not to say that it is irredeemably distorted. Far more verifiable is the reality that, at this stage of life, Ḥarrālī was deeply committed to the Sufi way of world-renunciation and moral scrupulousness. Among other things, this might have involved his keeping political figures at arm’s length. In other words, if Ḥarrālī had been by nature disengaged from political life in the first place, Ghubrīnī may not have had to redact a great many incidents of a political or contentious nature. What Ghubrīnī did have in ample supply were the testimonies by several Bijāyan students of Ḥarrālī who directly witnessed his way of life. On the authority of these students Ghubrīnī is able to aver that:

> His was a true asceticism, inwardly and outwardly; abstaining from the world in its totality and not inclining to anything of it. This was out of a goodness of spirit (‘an ḥabī nafsin) and an acceptance that the world meant nothing to him. Any [worldly] thing that came his way he would part with promptly.\footnote{Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 147-8.}
Such an ascetic ethos is emphasized by Maghribi Sufi culture at large during this period, including many of Ḥarrālī’s own mentors Fihrī, Dahmānī, Bājī, and Qurtubī, as well as by Abū Madyan, Western Sufism’s most iconic representative with whom all of the aforementioned figures are linked. The themes of asceticism (faqr) and scrupulousness (warāʾ) are also quite omnipresent in Ḥarrālī’s corpus. Ḥarrālī sometimes refers to asceticism in terms that are related to knowledge. Fundamentally, the virtues of self-effacement, moral uprightness, and worldly detachment all serve as a kind of purification on the epistemological level. In one of his ḥikam, Ḥarrālī says:

Knowledge is [a form of] prayer (al-ʿilm ṣalāḥ), valid only on condition of purity (ṭuhūr); and the purification [of knowledge] is through the ablution [using] the water of asceticism (wuḍūʾ māʾ al-zuhd), and through tayammum on the plane of scrupulousness (ṣaʿīd al-warāʾ).359

For Ḥarrālī, then, one of the more important fruits of Sufi asceticism is the cultivation of wisdom. In an epistle written during his sojourn in Bijāyah, Ḥarrālī reasons that “a man of wisdom is [ipso facto] poor from [the point of view of] the world (sāhib al-ḥikmah faqīr min al-dunyā)”. Referring to himself in the third person, he continues:

If one were to occupy himself with gathering [the things of] the world (jamʿ al-dunyā), wisdom would never crystalize in [such a person] (mā ijtamaʿat la-hu al-ḥikmah), for as it is said: perfection is to gather wisdom (al-kamāl jamʿ al-ḥikmah) and to freely give away material wealth (wa-badhī al-māl).360

As evinced by a number of other biographical anecdotes, “giving away material wealth” appears to have long been Ḥarrālī’s modus operandi by this stage of his life in Bijāyah. Oddly enough, the beneficent act almost always seems to involve Ḥarrālī’s parting with the clothes on his back. This is what happened, for example, when Ḥarrālī was visited in Bijāyah by a man

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359 Ḥarrālī, Ḥikam, p. 111, nr. 2. Cornell defines warāʾ in the context of Maghribi Sufism as “‘scrupulousness’ or ‘pious caution’ in the quest for ethical purity, especially with regard to eating food grown or prepared by others.” Cornell, Realm, p. 361.

360 Extract from Ḥarrālī’s letter to a Tarragona priest. See Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, Sabk, p. 87.
from out of town (gharīb) who claimed to be a descendent of the Prophet (ṣharīf). Cutting short the lecture which he had been giving, Ḥarrālī turned all his attention to the stranger and, as a gesture of reverence, gave him an expensive garment that he happened to be wearing at the time.361 After the man had departed, other attendees at the séance identified the stranger as a Marrakesh native, one who had evidently taken advantage of Ḥarrālī’s famously unconditional veneration for ahl al-bayt. Unperturbed, Ḥarrālī pointed out that it is the intention that counts.362

Such anecdotes featuring Ḥarrālī’s liberal openhandedness suggest that if he did start out his career blessed with wealth, he did not hold on to it for long. By the Bijāyah period, Ḥarrālī was likely living a life of material poverty, despite any notoriety he may have earned as a scholar. But while he himself might have been perfectly content in such circumstances, he was now implicating another, not-entirely-willing participant in his ascetic lifestyle: a wife named Karīmah. While in Bijāyah, Ḥarrālī apparently fathered children with Karīmah, including at least one son. Karīmah was allegedly known for her sour and capricious character (sayyi’at al-khuluq) and she did not take kindly to her husband’s asceticism, or more precisely, to the austere living conditions that this asceticism entailed for her and her household. Anecdotes in the ‘Unwān describe her as chronically dissatisfied with her lot and frequently derelict of her household duties.363

361 According to the editor, all of the manuscript copies of the ‘Unwān refer to the article of clothing as a ṭāshūr, a term that seems to have disappeared from use. The ṭāshūr worn by Ḥarrālī that day is qualified as “handsome” (malīḥ) and as being “worth a great sum of dirhams” (yusāwī jumlah kabīrah min al-darāhim).


363 See the two karāmah accounts featuring Karīmah in Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, pp. 148-9.
Frankly, at least some of the items on Karīmah’s list of marital grievances—for instance, the children having no food to eat—seem reasonable enough. In the ‘Unwān, however, the anecdotes involving Karīmah are presented as part of Ḥarrālī’s body of karāmāt. Viewed through the hagiographic prism, Karīmah’s intolerance of any form of privation, her lack of karam as it were, is made to contrast sharply with the saintly levels of magnanimity and patience displayed towards her by the shaykh. In addition to Ghubrīnī, the Tunisian biographer Ibn Ṭawwāḥ also makes a passing reference to Ḥarrālī’s “trials” (ibtīlā’) at the hands of his wife—trials which he takes as evidence of the shaykh’s feet being firmly rooted in friendship with God (rusūkh qadamih fī al-wilāyah).364

Ḥarrālī’s internalization of classic ascetic values not only created unintended tensions in his marital life, its effects also extended to his professional dealings. As Ghubrīnī notes, Ḥarrālī’s asceticism extended to his intellectual activities and influenced the manner in which he prepared for his lectures and composed his works:

[Ḥarrālī] practiced asceticism (zahida) even with books, for he owned none. In his seances he did not require reading (muṭāla’ah) or going over (murāja’ah) anything, because of the comprehensiveness (iḥāṭah) of his acquired knowledge. In writing all of his works, he did not consult or read other works; they were the sheer product of his thought (fikrihi) and the fixation of his intellect (tasdīd nażarīh).365

Besides indicating that Ḥarrālī was an active author during the Bijāyah period, these observations also help explain the lack of references in Ḥarrālī’s corpus. But it’s also significant that Ghubrīnī specifically identifies asceticism as influencing some of Ḥarrālī’s professional scholarship. One might argue, for example, that the aforementioned lack of references in Ḥarrālī’s corpus is itself partly an effect of his asceticism. That is, by declining to cite some of

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364 Ibn Ṭawwāḥ writes that it is unnecessary for him to give any further details of this apparently “famous affair” (amr mushtahir) between Ḥarrālī and his wife Karīmah. Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, Sabk, p. 89.

the influential figures whose ideas might serve to uphold and bolster his own, Ḥarrālī is effectively denying himself the opportunity to ride on the coattails of other scholars. The same idea also works in the sense of those reverse: by declining to explicitly name the scholars he opposes and whose ideas he is taking aim at, Ḥarrālī is denying himself the notoriety usually earned by authors of refutations.

This sense of untetheredness is also manifest in the personal and political side of Ḥarrālī’s professional scholarship. In the anecdote of Ḥarrālī and the mu’adhdhin, it was evident that on the one hand a self-assured Ḥarrālī was clearly intent on using the mosque as a platform from which to disseminate his teachings. On the other hand, it is also fair to speculate that, prior to his first séance, Ḥarrālī had not bothered to make prior arrangements with leading members of the religious elite, nor to secure the patronage of some politically influential figure. It is as if Ḥarrālī had naively hoped that if he just started preaching, he would be accepted purely on the merits of his Qur’ān and sunnah-anchored teachings. To be sure, Ghubrīnī’s account vindicates Ḥarrālī in the end. But one cannot help but wonder if a more world-wise scholar might have taken steps to preclude such an embarrassing situation in the first place, that is, being confronted by a relatively minor functionary, whom Ghubrīnī never deigns to name and whose duties, beyond giving the call to prayer, may have been more or less commensurate with those of a simple groundskeeper. In my view, what the account of Ḥarrālī’s encounter with the mu’adhdhin suggests is perhaps a naivete and lack of professional tact on Ḥarrālī’s part. Such an insinuation would obviously constitute an “inadvertent” lapse by Ghubrīnī, in the sense that it would not have been part of his authorial intention to emphasize shortcomings in Ḥarrālī’s professional character or intractable setbacks in his career.
Ḥarrālī’s want of political savvy may have been an innate shortcoming, an area in which he naturally lacked aptitude. But I strongly suspect that, at times in his career, Ḥarrālī deliberately refused to act on behalf of his own self-interest, out of his sheer commitment to Sufi asceticism and the classic virtues of reliance on God (tawakkul) and renouncing of the individual will (isqāṭ al-irādah). These principles are central to Ḥarrālī’s conception of the spiritual life. As Ḥarrālī explains in another one of his ḥikam, renouncing one’s own agency correlates positively to proximity to God:

When Allāh addresses the servant from behind the veil, He shows [the servant] (arāhu) that his actions proceed from himself by means of acquisition (al-iktiṣāb) and agency (iqtidār); [accordingly,] He treats the servant harshly (‘annafah), lays blame at his feet (lāmah), holds him to account (ḥāsabah), and requites him (jazāḥ). But if [God] removes the veil over his [servant’s] heart, He shows him that [all] actions are from God, and that [the servant] has no point of entry [to influence] (lā madkhal la-hu fī) anything in his Lord’s creation (khalq) nor fiat (amr); [accordingly,] He clears away [all] means of blame and reprimand.366

Ḥarrālī often also counsels the renouncement of “hope” (suqūṭ al-amal) which, though to modern sensibilities seems morbid, is itself just a particular modality of renunciation, one that is a function of time: renouncing hope in the future, whether it be in some reward, acquisition, achievement, or betterment of some kind, does not stem from a sense of despair but rather is the key, in Ḥarrālī’s view, to the beatific state of living in the present moment. As he counsels in one of his ḥikam:

Live your life [as if it were] a day, and your day [as if it were] a breath—you will live with a curtailed [sense of] hope, in [a state of] well-being (ij’al ’umraka yawman wa-yawmuka nafsan—ta’ish qaṣīr al-amal, fī ‘āfiyah).367

Viewed from another perspective, the foundational element of spiritual poverty (faqr) that is renouncing one’s own agency can also mean emancipating oneself from some of the illusory

366 Ḥarrālī, Ḥikam, p. 113, nr. 30.
367 Ḥārāllī, Ḥikam, p. 116, nr. 74.
constructs of subjectivity, to become, as Ḥarrālī puts it, “innocent” of such false notions as “‘I did’ and ‘I am doing’” (al-barā’ah min fa’altu wa-af’al). The critical complement of this doctrine is that the “other”, too, is striped of agency. To “annihilate oneself from ‘I’ and ‘You’ (al-fanā’ ‘an anā wa-anta)” means to see oneself and one’s peers to nothing other than instruments of the divine will. And one of the effects of extinguishing one’s own ego is that it preemptively disarms the potential effects of other egos—whether positive and negative.

Actualizing this virtue was an integral part of Ḥarrālī’s own spiritual training, as evinced in a rare autobiographical statement that has come down to us through the biographical literature:

For seven years, I engaged resolutely in spiritually combating my ego (nafs), until I could perceive no difference between one who gives me a dinār and one who denigrates me.

From a biographical standpoint, the seven-year period that the above quote refers to almost certainly coincides with some phase of Ḥarrālī’s pre-Bijāyah peregrinations in Ifrīqiyyā, Egypt and Ḥijāz. This means that, by the time Ḥarrālī turned up in Bijāyah, this outlook had already deeply crystalized. This is why I feel confident in advancing a particular interpretation of the mu’adhdhin anecdote which posits that Ḥarrālī may have partly brought the situation upon himself through lack of practical foreplanning and a refusal to “market” himself, ingratiate oneself to a patron, or engage in competition with peers—in sum, a refusal to work within the parameters of secondary causes (al-akhdh bi-al-asbāb).

For all that, it is important to remember that Ḥarrālī’s commitment to ascetic ideals was not so extreme that he refused, for example, to use his hands to bring food to his mouth (although he probably did fast a lot). Nor did he completely reject society and seek solitary refuge in a cave.

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368 Ḥarrālī, Ḥikam, p. 115, nr. 54.

369 This rare use of the first person is quoted by Ghubrīnī, most likely on the authority of intimate disciples of Ḥarrālī in Bijāyah. See Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 147.
Harrālī did in fact have worldly ambitions, of a kind. One of his primary career objectives was to engage with the discursive world of the ‘ulamā’, and even to bring about far-reaching reform in this arena. As Ghubrīnī puts it: “most of [Harrālī’s] discourse (akthar kalāmih)”, meaning his intellectual efforts in general including his writings, his lectures, his public sermonizing, etc.—all of it was ultimately aimed at “rehabilitating scholarship and the state of scholars (īslāḥ al-‘ilm wa-ḥāl al-‘ulamā’).” Harrālī was thus fundamentally oriented towards the world of the ‘ulamā’. He had aspirations beyond merely treading the spiritual path and guiding disciples; he also wanted to play the role of intellectual reformer. The problem is that he hoped to spread his influence through the sheer apodictic value of his teachings or through the power of intellectual persuasion alone, without abiding fully by the “rules of the game” or honing the skills required to achieve success in the world of the ‘ulamā’. Foremost among those skills would be sharpening—not deliberately dulling—the faculty that is able to discern between a dīnār-giving patron and a denigrating rival. Thus, one of the major tensions in Harrālī’s career, and the dynamic that Ghubrīnī may have inadvertently encapsulated in the mu‘adhdhin anecdote, is the clash between these two mutually opposing tendencies, that is, a Sufi desire to remain untainted by worldly ambition and yet, at the same time, as a scholar, exert a decisive influence on the discursive space.

**Harrālī and Abū Madyan**

The most renowned resident of Bijāyah in the era prior to Harrālī’s arrival was Abū Madyan. After a long sojourn in Fez, Abū Madyan reportedly settled in Bijāyah because he considered the city especially favorable for the making of a lawful living (muʿīnah ‘alā ṭalab al-ḥalāl). During his sojourn in the city, Abū Madyan’s spiritual authority was at its peak and he

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exercised it over a great many disciples from far and wide. Bijāyah’s geostrategic importance was also a factor in the wide dissemination of Abū Madyan’s brand of Sufism to the West as well as to the East. Despite leaving an indelible mark on Bijāyah itself, Abū Madyan is not buried in the city but rather in Western Algeria. Around the year 594/1198, Abū Madyan came to rest at a spot near Tlemcen while en route to Marrakesh, answering caliph al-Manṣūr’s summons to court.

After Abū Madyan’s departure, it was the aforementioned Abū Zakariyā’ al-Zawāwī371 (d. 611/1215) who seems to have taking over the role of standard bearer of Bijāyah tašawwuf. It is not clear if Zawāwī formally considered himself a disciple of Abū Madyan. It is reasonably certain that the two associated with one another. But Zawāwī was never as renowned as Abū Madyan nor, in some respects, was he cut from exactly the same spiritual cloth. Following primarily “the way of fear”, Zawāwī apparently stoked terror in his audience with his vivid descriptions of fire and brimstone during his seances. This is not to say that Abū Madyan minimized the eschatological reality of hellfire or the basic ethical importance of reward and punishment, but that his teachings included also more refined concepts.

At any rate, it’s worth noting that the space used by Abū Madyan during his years as a Sufi shaykh in Bijāyah appears to have eventually become the site of Zawāwī’s tomb.372 And most

371 Abū Zakariyā’ Yahyá ibn Abí ‘Alí al-Ḥaṣaní (or al-Ḥasnāwí) al-Zawāwī. A Kabyle shaykh and an accomplished master of the exoteric religious sciences which he had studied in the Mashriq. Among his teachers are al-Shāṭibī Ibn Ferro (qirā’āt), Aḥmad al-Lakhmí (uṣūl), al-Silafī (ḥadīth), and Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Salāwī. Zawāwī also appears to have been an associate of Abū Madyan. Zawāwī represented the torchbearer of tašawwuf in Bijāyah after the departure of Abū Madyan. At the great mosque of Bijāyah he taught ḥadīth, fiqh, and uṣūl. Ibn ‘Arabí appears to have met him in Bijāyah and describes him as “a most humble scholar”. Ibn Zayyat, Tashwwuf, pp. 428-9, nr. 256. Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, pp. 127-32, nr. 27. Ghubrīnī, pp. 127-132, nr. 27. Brunschvig, La Berbérie orientale, p. 320. Austin, Sufis of Andalusia, p. 160.

372 The exact location of the mosque or oratory that houses Zawāwī’s tomb is uncertain, since not many landmarks of medieval Bijāyah are extant. On the basis of written sources including Ghubrīnī’s ‘Unwān,
locals may have come to see Zawāwī as Abū Madyan’s de facto successor. As Rouighi has suggested, the local fervor that coalesced around the shrine of Zawāwī may have been partly a Bijāyan response to having being fatefuly dispossessed of Abū Madyan’s shrine.373 The site of Zawāwī’s tomb—and allegedly Abū Madyan’s old hunting grounds—is also where Ḥarrālī initially gravitated and where his encounter with the mu’adhdhin took place. Later, Ḥarrālī apparently used the same space for his solitary spiritual retreats (khalwah).374

Thus, to the extent that Abū Madyan and Zawawī were intuitively linked in the minds of Bijāyans, we may infer that, in the aforementioned mu’adhdhin anecdote, the blessing conferred on Ḥarrālī by Zawāwī from beyond the grave may have been understood in Bijāyan circles as a blessing by Abū Madyan by extension.

From a biographical point of view, Abū Madyan and Ḥarrālī share in common their long and impactful sojourns in this particular Mediterranean port-city. Both figures are portrayed by the Bijāyan biographer Ghubrīnī as active spiritual masters who, during their stay in the city, surrounded themselves with devoted followers. The sheer length and the richly detailed anecdotal content of both their biographical notices, relative to the vast majority of figures in the ‘Unwān, speaks to the deep impact both Abū Madyan and Ḥarrālī had on a local level. In this sense, the two stand apart from figures like Ibn ‘Arabī and Ibn Sab’in who, for all their universal fame, evidently passed through the city too briefly to have left a comparable personal mark.

Valérian estimates that the mosque (which Ghubrīnī refers to as a ribāṭ) may have been located either within the city walls in the “neighborhood of the pearl” (ḥūmat al-lu’lu’ah) or just outside the western gates of Bāb Amsiyūn and Bāb al-Marsá. Valérian, Bougie, pp. 111-3, 46f, 47f, 121, 116f. On the location of Zawāwī’s private mosque see also Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, pp. 27, 51, 150.

373 Rouighi, Emirate, p. 146.

We have already seen some of the way in which the spiritual methodology and general Sufi ethos of Ḣarrālī and Abū Madyan are similar, great owing no doubt to Ḣarrālī’s apprenticeship under Abū Madyan’s former disciples and associates (Dahmānī, Bājī, Fihrī). Neither Abū Madyan nor Ḣarrālī (nor any of the latter’s disciples) established a formal ṭarīqah in the sense of a corporate structure. As far as collective practice, we are told that Abū Madyan held spiritual sessions (samā’) at his home in Bijāyah. Ḣarrālī apparently did not. Nor did he preside over a dedicated physical space such as the zāwiyah which Zawāwī reportedly ran. The bulk of Ḣarrālī’s interaction with students seems to have occurred either at the mosque during his regular sessions or during long walks in and around the city with his more intimate companions.

One notable practice of Ḣarrālī’s was that, following the communal morning prayers at the mosque, he would regularly recite a special litany (ḥizb) consisting of sections of the Qur’ān, the Divine Names, and formulae of supplication used by the Prophet. Ḣarrālī’s ḥizb is reproduced in the ‘Unwān. 375 The ḥizb contains no special Sufi genealogical references. Moreover, Ḣarrālī appears to have engaged in this practice privately and it is unclear to what extent, if at all, he encouraged his disciples to join him or adopt it for themselves. But since the litany has clearly come down to posterity, it could not have been some tightly guarded secret.

But the question then remains: did Ḣarrālī self-consciously or even publicly style himself as a successor to Abū Madyan during his sojourn in Bijāyah. Despite the aforementioned parallels, Ḣarrālī appears to have forged his own unique path. The most emphatic evidence of this is found in Ghubrīnī’s barnāmaj, a kind of curriculum vitae which in the ‘Unwān is appended to the main

375 Ghubrīnī (‘Unwān, pp. 152-3) states that Ḣarrālī was known for having adhkār wa-awrād and that among those adhkār was the ḥizb which he then quotes in full. This ḥizb is one of several extensive passages from Ḣarrālī’s notice in the ‘Unwān that have been translated into French by Dermenghem in her article “Al-Hirrâlî: Un çoufi du XIIIe siècle, érudit, métaphysicien, philosophe et poète”.

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body of the biographical work. The barnāmaj is divided into two major sections: riwāyah (which includes hadīth and tafsīr) and dirāyah (which includes ʿuṣūl al-ḥiṣb, ʿuṣūl al-dīn, taṣawwuf, manṭiq). With respect to the science of Sufism (ʿilm al-taṣawwuf), Ghubrīnī states that he received the influence of three masters: Abū Madyan, Ḥarrālī, and Ibn Maknūn. Interestingly, Ghubrīnī appears to receive the influence of these three masters through five separate channels, as shown in the following figure:

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377 Ghubrīnī’s Barnāmaj is appended to the main body of the ‘Unwān, pp. 355-401. The section on ‘ilm al-taṣawwuf is found on pp. 359-60.
It should be observed that these lineages are not meant to be understood, strictly speaking, as Sufi initiatory chains (*silsilahs*) but rather as channels through which the knowledge (*‘ilm*) of these figures was passed down. This may have been through passing down a written corpus, but also, more generally, the orally communicable Sufi wisdom. This is why Ghubrīnī could receive Ḥarrālī’s influence through two distinct channels: via Ibn Rabī’378 and via Ibn Maḥjūbah379 two contemporaneous, direct disciples of Ḥarrālī in Bijāyah. As Ḥarrālī never designated any one

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378 One of Ḥarrālī principal disciples and the first to be discussed below.

379 An early disciple of Ḥarrālī who was discussed in the previous chapter.
successor, he apparently left it to his foremost disciples to establish themselves as spiritual authorities in their own right. In the case of Ibn Rabī‘ and Ibn Maḥjūbah, each went on to transmit a version of their master’s legacy on to which they likely superimposed idiosyncratic elements drawn from their own spiritual vision.

The same dynamic seems to be at play in Ghubrīnī’s reception, through two distinct lineages, of the influence of Abū Madyan. Lineage (1) runs through the famous Abū Muḥammad Šāliḥ380 and Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Sijilmāssī381 while lineage (2) runs through Abū Zahr al-Rabī‘382

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382 Abū Zahr al-Rabī‘, was a kātib for the governors of Bijāyah (kātiban li-al-‘ummāl bi-Bijāyah) and later in life became a disciple of Abū Madyan. The little information that exists on him can be found in an anecdote (in the notice of Abū Madyan) Ibn Qunfudh, Uns al-faqīr, pp. 101-2.
and his son Ibn Rabī’. Lineage (5) is of a more mysterious origin and traces back to Abū al-
Ḥasan al-Rundi and the unidentified figure of Ibn Maknūn.

For our purposes, the central implication of Ghubrīnī’s spiritual lineage is that Ḥarrālī’s
brand of ṭaṣawwuf was perceived as unique. In other words, Ḥarrālī’s was presumed to be an
original wellspring of Sufi wisdom, distinct from that of Abū Madyan. This is why it is possible
for the figure of Ibn Rabī’ to receive the legacies of two masters—that of Ḥarrālī directly and that
of Abū Madyan via his father—then transmit to Ghubrīnī each of the legacies in their integrity
and without merging them.

There are other important differences to be noted between Ḥarrālī and Abū Madyan’s styles
as Sufi masters. Despite both being devoted to the spiritual formation of disciples, Abū
Madyan’s influence in this regard was undoubtedly wider. However, Ḥarrālī also expended
significant energy on doctrinal writings, considerably much more so than Abū Madyan. In this
sense, Ḥarrālī is more akin to Ibn ʿArabī, though not nearly as quantitatively prolific as the latter.
Perhaps it could be said that Ḥarrālī stood at a midway point between the style of Abū Madyan,

383 There may even be a subtle difference in the content of the heritage carried in lineage 1 and 2. It is
implied elsewhere in the ‘Unwān that lineage 1 goes back before Abū Madyan to the Moroccan Berber
saint Abū Ya’zā in a chain that ultimately goes back to ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. So its possible that one of the
lineages Abū Madyan was himself simply transmitting from his masters, while the other lineage
represents a more idiosyncratic Madyanite tradition. See Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 124. Similarly, it should
be noted that in his Barnāmaj, and after citing the two lineages (3 and 4) that go back to Ḥarrālī, Ghubrīnī
comments enigmatically: “this ṭariqa traces back to luminaries (wa-hādhihi al-ṭariqah tantahī ilá a’lām) and
ascends to eminent masters known for their excellence (wa-targā ilā sādāt ‘urifū bi-al-faḍl kirām).
Aside from Ghubrīnī’s probably anachronistic use of the term ṭariqa, what does he mean by this
statement? Is it simply redundant praise for Ḥarrālī or is it in reference to unnamed masters of the latter?
See Ghubrīnī, ‘Uwnān, pp. 359-60.

601/1204. Appears to be the brother of the belletrist ‘Umar who studied under the theologian Ibn al-

385 Abū al-‘Abbās Ibn Maknūn. I have not been able to identify this figure.
with its salvific emphasis on the practice of spiritual virtues and the oral instruction of disciples, and that of Ibn ‘Arabī, with his concern for literary production and the exposition of doctrine.

Its also worth pointing out that, in comparison with Abū Madyan, Ḥarrālī evinced an interest in a significantly broader and more eclectic array of disciplines. Ḥarrālī’s erudition reportedly encompassed disciplines such as of adab, usūl, logic, philosophy, mathematics (in the form of ‘ilm al-farā‘īd), and the natural sciences (‘ilm al-ṭabī‘īyāt). With respect to the technical aspects of the traditional religious sciences, like fiqh, Ḥarrālī’s knowledge probably surpassed both Abū Madyan and Ibn ‘Arabī. There are a couple instructive anecdotes in the ‘Unwān that are worth examining in this regard. One anecdote is found in the notice of Abū Zakariyyā’ al-Laftānī (fl. ca. 630/1232), a jurist, traditionist and Qur’ān reciter of Andalusian origins who emigrated to Bijāyah shortly after 630/1232 and lectured at the city’s great mosque. Laftānī appears to have had some influence in Ifrīqiyyā—he was invited by the Ḥafṣids to Tunis at some stage. Oddly enough, however, the better part of his notice in the ‘Unwān is taken up by an account of his disputation with Ḥarrālī on a legal question. While the content of the debate is

386 Unlike most of the other disciplines, Ghubrīnī gives no further elaboration on Ḥarrālī’s knowledge of the “natural sciences”. Ghubrīnī just states rather hyperbolically that he was the most knowledgeable of all in this field (wa-ammā ‘ilm al-ṭabī‘īyāt wa-al-[ilāḥiyāt] fa-kāna a′lam al-nās bi-hā). There are some ḥikam of Ḥarrālī that refer in learned, if somewhat broad, terms to aspects of medicine and biology. Little else in Ḥarrālī’s extant corpus deals with “natural sciences”. Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 144.


388 The reasons for this disproportion are unclear. It may simply be another case of inconsistent information management on Ghubrīnī’s part; was this the only anecdote involving Laftānī that Ghubrīnī was aware of? It is also hypothetically possible, given the potential for such disputes to turn acrimonious, that Laftānī later leveraged his Ḥafṣid connection to stir up trouble for Ḥarrālī, perhaps influencing the Ḥafṣids’ decision to expel Ḥarrālī from Bijāyah. Ghubrīnī of course is too conciliatory-minded to mention
of only secondary interest, it is still worth reproducing here because, given that no fiqh work of Ḥarrālī’s has survived, it gives us a rare detailed glimpse into Ḥarrālī’s style of legal reasoning:

An affair occurred during that time [the 630’s/1230’s] in the seance (majlis) of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ḥarrālī regarding the legal value (fi ḥukm) of the three ritual washings (al-ghasalāt al-thalāth) when performed by (idhā atá bi-hā) a legally liable compos mentis (mukallaf). The shaykh [Ḥarrālī] reported that, according to some savants, all of them are obligatory. When the faqīh Abū Zalariyā’ [al-Laftānī] heard of this he disputed [Ḥarrālī’s opinion] with both transmitted and rational proofs (ankarahu naqlan wa-fiqhan). The shaykh [Ḥarrālī] pointed out that [what Laftānī had cited] is but one line of transmission and one line of reasoning (dhakara anna dhālika naqlun wa-fiqhun). On the question of transmission, [Ḥarrālī] referred to the commentary of Ibn Baṭṭāl on Bukhārī. As for the rational argument, [Ḥarrālī] said this is similar to the characteristics of expiatory amends (ka-khiṣāl al-kaffārah) in the case of one who maintains that all the amends are obligatory and that the obligation is void if any one of the amends is not performed (yasquṭ al-fard bi-al-wāḥid min-hā). The support (misnad) of this argument is that God has commanded ritual washing (ghasl). Now the term ghasl is a verbal noun (maṣdar) implying both abundance and paucity (al-kathīr wa-al-qalīl). Thus, a single unit falls under its purview, as would two units or three. Then [Ḥarrālī] considered the following demurral: that the verbal noun also encompasses numbers that are greater than three.

[Ḥarrālī] said: that has to be considered invalid in light of the Prophet saying: “three is noble, any more is immoderateness (al-thalāth sharaf wa-al-ziyādah saraf)”. Now, consensus of opinion maintains that it is valid to abstain (al-ijmā’ awrada ‘alayh jawāz al-tark). [Ḥarrālī] said: thus, the compulsion is voided by [the non-fulfilment] of one unit (yasquṭ al-fard bi-al-wāḥid), and if all units are performed then it falls under the scope of the obligatory (wa-idhā utiya bi-al-jamī’ kāna fī ḥayyiz al-wājib). Then some of the shaykh’s [Ḥarrālī] students went back and forth until [Ḥarrālī] discussed the matter with Abī Zakariyā’ al-Laftānī and debated him on it.390

In another anecdote designed to proclaim Ḥarrālī’s fiqh bona fides, Ghubrīnī tells us that, after realizing the extent of Ḥarrālī’s immersion in a great many theoretical sciences (istighrāqihi fi funūn min al-ʿilm), a group of (unnamed) Bijāyan jurists began openly questioning Ḥarrālī’s

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command of the basics of Mālikī law. Upon learning of this, Ḥarrālī set about proving his detractors wrong by devoting sessions to the teaching of al-Barādhi‘ī’s (d. 386/966) al-Tahdhib li-masā’il al-Mudawwanah and making a special point of flagging the particular instances where the Tahdhib contradicts the original Mudawwanah of Saḥnūn (160-240/776-854). By demonstrating his knowledge of the minutiae of Mālikī legal literature, Ḥarrālī allegedly quieted his critics.

What is interesting is that the hagiographical literature on Abū Madyan also contains accounts of him being subjected to tests by skeptical and envious fuqahā’. Abū Madyan was made to undergo trials designed to test his knowledge of Mālikī law—trials in which he miraculously succeeds and which are presented as karāmāt. The difference is that, for Ḥarrālī, it is not divine intervention that vindicates him in these particular debates. Rather, it is a case of him knowing the material to the same pedantic degree as the professional jurists. And while, separately, a number of other miraculous feats are indeed attributed to Ḥarrālī, the two accounts above involving Ḥarrālī’s disputes with fuqahā’ in Bijāyah are not apparently counted among them.

Other Intellectual Forerunners

391 This anecdote is found in Ḥarrālī’s own notice in Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 145. It is related by Ghubrīnī on the authority of his shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ibn Makhlūf, who was one of Ḥarrālī’s more legal-minded students.


393 This account of Ḥarrālī teaching the works of Saḥnūn and Barādhi‘ī would suggest that he had a preference for the usūl methodologies of the mutaqaddimūn.

394 According to Ghubrīnī, some of these envious fuqahā’ were behind Abū Madyan’s summoning to Marrakesh. Gril, EI3, “Abū Madyan”.

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Abū Madyan was not the only one who shaped the Bijāyan religious and intellectual space that Ḥarrālī stepped into circa 1230. Two figures in particular are of special importance and have dedicated notices in the ‘Unwān despite the fact that their death dates fall prior to the 7th century timeframe. One of these is Ibn al-Kharrāṭ\(^{395}\) (510-581/1116-1185), a Sufi-leaning jurisconsult who left his native Seville during the tumultuous collapse of the Almoravids and spent the final phase of his career in Bijāyah where he served as qāḍī and khaṭīb. A former student of the Andalusian traditionist Abū al-Ḥasan Shurayḥ, Ibn al-Kharrāṭ’s main specialty was ḥadīth, a field in which he earned the title of ḥāfiẓ. As one of the most prominent members of the Almerian school of ḥadīth study which had transplanted itself to Bijāyah following the fall of the Spanish city to the Reconquista, Ibn Kharrāṭ stood at the center of Bijāyan intellectual life and was the de facto leader of the city’s large Andalusian refugee community. Bijāyah was probably where the majority of Ibn al-Kharrāṭ’s works were composed, including his well-known trilogy al-‘Aḥkām al-kubrá, al-Wuṣṭá, and al-Sughrá in which he endeavored a synthesis of law and ḥadīth.\(^{396}\)

During the earlier Andalusian phase of his career, Ibn al-Kharrāṭ had also been a prominent disciple of the Sufi scholar Ibn Barrajān. As well, he mentored the young Ibn ‘Arabī for a time.


\(^{396}\) This work was supplemented and commented on by later scholars including Ibn al-Qaṭṭān, Ḥarrālī’s teacher from his early Maghrib years, who wrote a critique titled Bayān al-wahm wa-al-‘ībām fi-mā waqa’a min al-khalal fl al-Aḥkām al-kubrá li-’Abd al-Ḥaqq.
In Bijāyah, Ibn al-Kharrāṭ eventually established a collegial relationship with Abū Madyan, despite some initial tension between the two. Thus, Ibn Kharrāṭ potentially represents an important link between Andalusian and Maghribī currents of taṣawwuf.

It should be mentioned that Ibn al-Kharrāṭ’s assumption of the function of qāḍī in Bijāyah occurred during the brief occupation of the city by Ibn Ghāniyah, an Almoravid rebel. After Bijāyah was retaken by the Almohad caliph al-Manṣūr, Abū Ghāniyah’s forces fled south in the desert, where they remained a tenacious threat until they were finally overcome by Abū Zakarīyā al-Ḥafṣī. For his part, Ibn al-Kharrāṭ was seen by the Almohads as an active cooperator with the rebels. Apparently, Ibn al-Kharrāṭ had refused the same position of qāḍī when it had been previously offered to him by the Almohads. He had also always been open about his skepticism of Almohad creed, particularly concerning the infallibility of the Mahdī. After the Almohad reoccupation of Bijāyah, Ibn al-Kharrāṭ appears to have suffered persecution at the hands of the city’s Almohad governor (miḥnah min al-dawlah).

One of Ibn al-Kharrāṭ’s close associates in Bijāyah was the uṣūl specialist Abū ‘Alī al-Masīlī (d. ca. 580/1185). A more homegrown figure from the Maghrib interior, Masīlī was

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397 An account in Uns al-faqīr describes how in Bijāyah Ibn al-Kharrāṭ and his associate Masīlī were both skeptical of Abū Madyan. However, that same source indicates that the two ultimately reconciled after Ibn Kharrāṭ recognized Abū Madyan’s deep knowledge and sanctity. Ibn Qunfudh, Uns al-faqīr, pp. 34-5.

398 The biographers differ on the fate of Ibn al-Kharrāṭ. Ibn al-Zubayr maintains that he died under Almohad torture, while ‘Abd al-Wāḥid al-Murrākushī claims that he died peacefully in his bed, despite al-Manṣūr’s determination to have him executed. As for Ghubrānī, his silence on the subject is no doubt part and parcel of his attempts to minimize some of the more ugly episodes of Bijayah’s history. Besides Ibn al-Kharrāṭ, there were other scholars of Andalusian origin who were suspected of collusion with Abū Ghāniyah. Caliph al-Manṣūr’s summoning of Abū Madyan to Marrakesh may have been connected to this issue.

399 Abū ‘Alī Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Masīlī in reference to the town of Masīlah in the inner central Maghrib. Ghubrānī’s notice on Masīlī at times waxes hagiographical. One story presented as a karāmah sees Masīlī prevailing over a politically well-connected colleague. Masīlī’s grave outside of Bijāyah appears to have been a source of tabarruk at least up until Ghubrānī’s time. Ghubrānī, ‘Unwān al-
equally renowned for his ability to balance both exoteric and esoteric perspectives. Because of the methodological similarities between his works and those of al-Ghazālī, Māsīlī came to be known as Abū Ḥāmid al-Ṣaghīr. The erudite reputations of Māsīlī and Ibn Kharrāṭ’s were such that the small shop (ḥānūt) in Bijāyah where they gathered to discuss scholarly matters came to be known locally as the city of knowledge (madīnat al-‘ilm).

Another forerunner worth mentioning is Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Uṣūlī (d. 612/1215). A reputable ʿusūl specialist as his name implies, Uṣūlī held judgeship posts Marrakesh, Murcia, and other cities under Almohad control before returning to his native Bijāyah. Being more rationalist-minded and less inclined to taṣawwuf, Uṣūlī cut more of an isolated figure in the Bijāyan context and stood apart from the more closely interconnected and pro-Ghazālī circles of Abū Madyan, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar al-Qurashī, also known as Ibn Qurayshah. He appears to be distinct from Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ṭāhir ibn al-Qurashī, the Sufi master of Qurṭubī and Qaṣṭallānī who has been mentioned in the previous chapter. Not much is known about this other figure though he is clearly connected to the Sufi tradition since he is remembered for having been a champion of Ṣufis (fuqarā’) and gnostics (‘ārif bi-Allāh) against any and all detractors. Sha‘rānī claims he was a student of Abū al-Rabī’ al-Māliqī.

A third notable figure who attended these sessions (majālis) is Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar al-Qurashī, also known as Ibn Qurayshah. He appears to be distinct from Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ṭāhir ibn al-Qurashī, the Sufi master of Qurṭubī and Qaṣṭallānī who has been mentioned in the previous chapter. Not much is known about this other figure though he is clearly connected to the Sufi tradition since he is remembered for having been a champion of Ṣufis (fuqarā’) and gnostics (‘ārif bi-Allāh) against any and all detractors. Sha‘rānī claims he was a student of Abū al-Rabī’ al-Māliqī.


Ibn Kharrāṭ, and Masīlī. Rather, Uṣūlī found common cause with Ibn Rushd (d. 595/1198) who had been his associate and mentor during his career in the Far West and with whom he shared an interest in philosophy, dialectic debate, and disputation (al-khilāfiyyāt wa-al-jadal). And like Ibn Rushd, Uṣūlī also suffered persecution because of his philosophical inclinations. During his final years in Bijāyah, Uṣūlī’s rationalist teachings attracted a limited audience. The comparatively more popular teachings of Abū Madyan, on offer a couple decades earlier, and those of Ḥarrālī a couple decades later, probably owes to the fact that their engagement with the theoretical sciences was carried out from within an all-encompassing mystical perspective.

Abū Madyan, Ibn Kharrāṭ, Masīlī, and Uṣūlī to some extent are the figures who set the tone for a century of marked intellectual vigor in Bijāyah. Of course, if the 7th/13th century appears to constitute an intellectual high water mark in Bijāyah’s history, this may partly be due to the fact that the period coincides with the historical parameters inherent in the ‘Unwān’s methodology.

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403 One of the works which Uṣūlī taught and was considered an expert on was al-Juwaynī’s Irshād. Uṣūlī authored a fairly influential critical commentary on Ghazālī’s Mustasfā. He may have also composed a treatise on music but, claiming to have inspected a copy, Ghubrīnī believes the work may have been of Avicennan authorship.

404 Early in his career while studying ḥadīth under Abū al-Ṭāhir al-Silaфи, Uṣūlī was accused of heresy and expelled from Alexandria. Later on, he would attend al-Manṣūr’s audiences but would suffer a rocky relationship with the Almohad caliph. Towards the end of his life, Uṣūlī’s headstrong personality and readiness to criticize the political elites landed him in trouble with the Almohad governor of Bijāyah. Though unwilling to fully endorse Uṣūlī’s rationalist outlook, many of his biographers praise the principled stoicism he displayed in the face of official persecution.

405 Another factor is the paucity of dedicated prosopographical sources covering other periods of the city’s intellectual history. Urvoys’s notion of Bijāyan intellectual excellence in the 13th century is predicated, for example, on the assumption of the onset of inertia and decline in the 14th century—a claim that relies (perhaps overly so) on the testimony of ‘Abdārī’s travel diary al-Riḥlah al-Maghribiyah. Urvoys writes: “On a beaucoup reproché au voyageur Muhammad al-‘Abdarī ses jugements sommaires. Mais il faut reconnaître que lorsqu’il condamne de façon générale et catégorique la décadence intellectuelle de Bougie, n’en exceptant que quelques lettrés, son impression peut se comprendre. En 688/1289, les membres de la tendance la plus féconde (by which Urvoys apparently means Ḥarrālī’s group, among others) sont tous partis ou décédés. Si quelques membres de la génération d’al-Ghubrīnī ont été tentés de
Still, one can make the case that, relative to earlier periods in the broader Maghrib region, Bijāyah’s discursive space during this period is marked by a spirit of enterprise and intellectual openness. According to Urvoy, who in his piece *La structuration du monde des Ulemas a Bougie au VIIe/XIIIe siècle* charts the broad contours of the city’s intellectual topography using statistical data derived from the ‘Unwān, one of the defining characteristics of this period is the overall strength of the theoretical disciplines including the two *uşūl*, Sufism, and philosophy.406

And it is in these fields in particular in which Ḥarrālī, and his foremost students excelled. Admittedly, this too is an impression that one gleans from Ghubrīnī’s ‘Unwān. That is, the notion that Ḥarrālī’s group played a major role in Bijāyah’s intellectual renaissance, may be partly a consequence of Ghubrīnī having studied under several former students of Ḥarrālī— hence why on occasion he calls Ḥarrālī “the master of our masters” (shaykh shuyūkhinā). At times, Ghubrīnī sings Ḥarrālī’s praises at such lavish length that it could understandably trigger a skeptical reaction in the modern historian.407 And yet, within Ghubrīnī’s frequently hyperbolic

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406 Urvoy’s article is an extension of the analytical model employed in his famous *Le Monde des Ulémas andalous du V/XIe au VII/XIIIe siècle*, which relies extensively on the biographical works of Bashkawāl (Ṣilah) and Ibn Abbār (Takmilah). In his analysis of Ghubrīnī’s ‘Unwān, Urvoy considers indicators such as the number of scholars specializing in each discipline. Certain recurring combinations of disciplines practiced by individual scholars can also be illustrative, in Urvoy’s view, of the state of inter-disciplinary relations. Whatever the merits of Urvoy’s *Monde des Ulémas andalous*, his piece *Structuration* is more problematic. Generalistic, sweeping speculations, inadequately supported, imprecise references. My main criticism is that, any effort to assess the overall intellectual topography of Bijāyah will require more than just an analysis of a single biographical work, however detailed the analysis and however pivotal the biographical work. It will require close monographic studies of the individual actors involved and of the texts produced by these figures. This effort obviously falls outside the scope of this dissertation. But by offering a closer look at least one of the main actors involved, i.e. Ḥarrālī and his particular circle, this dissertation partly contributes to this end.

407 The following passage of breathless adulation is a good sample: “...As for the science of ḥadīth, [Ḥarrālī] possessed preeminence in it and a high pedigree (‘ulu’ sanad). In the science of Arabic he was advanced in terms of *lughah*, *adab*, and *nahw*. He is the author of lucent, preternatural poetry on the
mode of expression, there is a reasonable enough degree of consistency throughout the ‘Unwān as a whole that allows us to obtain a sense of the relative stature of a figure like Ḥarrālī in the Bijāyan context. For instance, it is very common to find in the ‘Unwān figures with no direct ties to Ghubrīnī who are praised profusely by the latter for their learnedness in some of the same fields in which Ḥarrālī supposedly excelled. The key takeaway in Ḥarrālī’s case, the nugget of authenticity, is not that Ḥarrālī was necessarily unsurpassed in every field as Ghubrīnī claims he was, but that he was comfortable and competent in an unusually wide array of fields. This notion of Ḥarrālī as a polymath is borne out in other ways, for example: the remarkably broad spectrum of academic specialties practiced by Ḥarrālī’s Bijāyan students, to which subject we now turn.

Ibn Rabī’

Probably the brightest and most well-rounded of all Ḥarrālī’s students during the Bijāyah period is ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq Ibn Rabī’. He hailed from a family originally from the Andalusian town of Ubeda (near Jaen) which changed from Muslim to Christian hands in 1234. Well before that event, his great-grandfather emigrated to Bijāyah, which is where Ibn Rabī’ was born and raised. His early education involved a brief stint in Algiers (al-Jazā’ir) where he studied under the grammarian Abū ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mandās. Otherwise Ibn Rabī’ does not appear

subjects of love and taṣawwuf. And he possesses peerless knowledge in the field of inheritance (farā’īd). As for the science of Sufism he is the imām, with beautiful compositions that are clear and easy. In short, when [Ḥarrālī] discourses on a science, the beholder supposes that he knows no other [science].”

Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 146.


to have undertaken any travel within or beyond the greater Maghrib region and lived for most of his life in the city of Bijāyah. There, his teachers and associates include the uṣūl specialist ‘Umar al-‘Amrī (d. after 660/1262), the linguist and logician ‘Abd Allāh al-Aghmātī (fl. 13th century), and the important figure of ‘Alī ibn Abī Naṣr (d. 652/1254), a traditionist of saintly repute. Strangely, the only student of Ibn Rabī’ that we know of is Ghubrīnī himself, i.e. the author of the ‘Unwān. However, this is undoubtedly less a factual appraisal of the size of Ibn Rabī’ s following and more a reflection of the ‘Unwān’s chronic failure to systematically itemize all of the relevant prosopographical data pertaining to any given figure.

The ‘Unwān does at least provide an ample account of the multi-faceted nature of Ibn Rabī’, a figure who was evidently capable of both analytic rigor and artistic sensibility. At a basic level, Ibn Rabī’ possessed a solid command of Mālikī fiqh. Throughout the ‘Unwān, his name often comes prefixed with the title al-faqīh, suggesting that his most widely recognized role was as jurisconsult. Two different qāḍī posts were offered to Ibn Rabī’ by the Ḥafṣid amir al-Mustanṣir

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410 Abū ‘Alī ‘Umar ibn Aḥmad al-‘Amrī. A Bijāyah native who studied ḥadīth (and probably uṣūl as well) under al-Uṣūlī. According to Ghubrīnī, al-‘Amrī traveled to the Mashriq and studied under some of the same teachers as did Ḥarrālī (jal-‘Amrī shāraka al-Ḥarrālī fī jumlah min mashā ’ikhhī al-ladhīna qara’ ‘alayhim bi-al-mashriq). This suggests that the two might have travelled in the Mashriq together and continued their association in Bijāyah. With his interest in taṣawwuf, ‘Amrī’s scholarly profile dovetails well enough with that of Ḥarrālī as to suggest the two were ideological allies. In this sense, al-‘Amrī’s stance contra Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī may be significant. Besides Ibn Rabī’, al-‘Amrī and Ḥarrālī shared at least two other students: the jurist ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ibn Makhlūf and the Sufi Ibn Maḥjūbah. Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 268, nr. 85 and p. 177.

411 Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn Yahyā al-Aghmātī. In his study of the ‘Unwān, Urvoy lists Aghmātī as one of the main members of the Ibn Rabī’/Ḥarrālī group. But while he may have associated with Ibn Rabī’, there is no direct evidence that he was an associate or student of Ḥarrālī. Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, pp. 223-4, nr. 58. Urvoy, Structuration, p. 104.

(r. 647-675/1249-1277), one in Bijāyah and the other in Constantine (Qasanṭīnah). Both offers were declined. In shunning the political and financial opportunities of the qādī position, Ibn Rabīʿ was most likely following in the footsteps of Ḥarrālī who, as his primary spiritual mentor, emphasized ascetic self-abnegation and a pious wariness of the political arena. Still, those who did assume the formal duties of qādī regularly turned to Ibn Rabīʿ for consultation. The latter apparently preferred to work quietly behind the scenes, playing the role, as Ghubrīnī puts it, of judge over judges (al-qādī ʿalā al-quadāt).

According to Ghubrīnī, Ibn Rabīʿ possessed an agreeable, playful personality (daʿābah mustaḥsanah mustaṭrifah) that was rare among scholars of his rank.413 His charisma and eloquence endeared him to all layers of Bijāyan society and positioned him to play the role of mediator and ombudsman (wāsiṭat niẓām ahl zamānih). One indispensable administrative skill of Ibn Rabīʿ was his calligraphic ability. Likened by Ghubrīnī to Ibn Muqla (d. 328/940), the famous ‘Abbāsid calligrapher and state official, Ibn Rabīʿ was reportedly capable of executing a variety of formal styles. Because of this, he was involved in the drawing up of wathāʾiq (sing. wathīqah), official documents of a legal or diplomatic nature. Ibn Rabīʿ had several associates who were prominent administrators and connected to the Ḥafṣid chancellery.414

413 According to Ghubrīnī, Ibn Rabīʿ strove above all else to maintain an upright character. He would often cite the hadīth: “The first thing that is placed on the scales is good character” (awwal mā yūḍaʿ fī al-mīzān al-khuluq al-ḥasan). Then he would comment on it saying: “whosoever does not possess that which is placed first in the scale [effectively] possesses nothing else, because [good character] represents the foundation.”

414 These include Muḥammad al-Waghlīsī (fl. 13th century), see Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 282, nr. 88; Muḥammad al-Khushanī (fl. 13th century), Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, pp. 252-3, nr. 75; and Abū Zakariyāʾ ibn Ḥabūs al-Hamadānī (fl. 13th century), Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, pp. 254-5, nr. 76. In the case of some of these figures, Ibn Rabīʿ is explicitly mentioned as a student while in other cases such an association may be assumed because much of the anecdotal information about these figures in the ‘Unwān is related on the authority of Ibn Rabīʿ.
In addition, Ibn Rabī’ was known for his fine literary compositions. His correspondence with the celebrated belletrist Abū al-Muṭarrif Ibn ‘Amīrah⁴¹⁵ (1186-1260) was allegedly held up as a paragon of epistolary writing. During his apprenticeship under Ḥarrālī, Ibn Rabī’ also composed a five-hundred-line Sufi ode (al-Qaṣīdah al-ṣūfiyyah). Preserved in the ‘Unwān is a fifteen-line section of that poem, which Ḥarrālī had reportedly singled out for special distinction. This canto contains metaphysical and mystical themes similar to those evident in the works of his teacher—for example, the mystic’s ability to comprehend the “speech” (nuṭq) of natural phenomena. Unfortunately, these lines of mystical poetry may very well constitute the only extant piece of writing by Ibn Rabī’.

Perhaps the most intellectually significant aspect of Ibn Rabī’ is his involvement in the theoretical sciences, including logic (al-manṭiq), mathematics (al-ḥisāb) and estate law (al-farā’d). Presumably, Ibn Rabī’ studied these disciplines at least in part at the feet of Ḥarrālī, who according to the ‘Unwān is credited with authoring a work logic titled Beings of First Intention (al-Maqūlāt al-uwal)⁴¹⁶ as well as one on farā’d titled al-Wāfī. Certainly, Ibn Rabī’ studied philosophy under Ḥarrālī. In his testimony to Ghubrīnī several decades later, Ibn Rabī’ recalls seances in which Ḥarrālī delved into Ibn Sīnā’s (d. 427/1037) Kitāb al-najāh (The Book of Salvation):

We used to study under [Ḥarrālī] the Najāh of Abū ‘Alī Ibn Sīnā. He used to lay bare [Ibn Sīnā’s] arguments (kāna yanquḍu ‘urāh naqḍan), but only after elucidating the parts [of the treatise] that are


⁴¹⁶ In some cases this title is written as al-Maʿqūlāt al-uwal in which case “First Analytics” may be a better translation.
worthy (wa-dhālika ba’da an yuwaḍḍīh minhu mā yalīq) and re-formulating [the parts] in a more optimum manner (wa-yuqarriruhu bi-aḥsan ṭariq). Then he would tear him down and undercut him (thumma yanquduhu wa-yūhinuh).  

On balance, the tenor of Ḥarrālī’s seances was evidently critical. Yet it is equally evident that Ḥarrālī’s critique was nuanced and involved a considerable degree of re-construction. In this sense, Ḥarrālī’s approach to Ibn Sīnā and the peripatetic tradition may have been comparable to that of Ghazālī: an unmistakably critical but at the same time learned stance, implicitly cognizant of the value certain elements of of the philosophical system and willing to salvage them. Besides Ḥarrālī, very few scholars in Bijāyah, and in the Maghrib as a whole, were engaging directly with the thought of Ibn Sīnā at this time. But as stimulating a prospect as this may be, the reality is that Ḥarrālī’s surviving corpus contains no explicit references to Ibn Sīnā’s ideas. There is therefore no way to describe with any confidence Ḥarrālī’s nuanced critique of Ibn Sīnā.  

On the subject of mystical thinkers critical of peripatetic philosophy, it is worth mentioning that Ibn Rabi‘ apparently had some kind of association with the notorious Ibn Sab‘īn (d. 669/1269) who, according to the ‘Unwān, lived in Bijāyah and taught certain esoteric sciences (funūn khāṣṣah) for a brief period circa 1248. It is also well-known that Bijāyah was where Ibn Sab‘īn met his famous disciple Shushtarī (d. 668/1269). According to the ‘Unwān, Ibn Sab‘īn

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admired Ibn Rabī‘ and praised him in some of his works. But the larger passage in which Ghubrīnī’s claim is couched is somewhat confusing, at least to me. For Ghubrīnī goes on to refer to a document drafted by Ibn Rabī‘ which appears to be a deed of sale of a seagoing vessel of some sort (wathīqat ibtiyā‘ safīnah). And at first glance, Ibn Sab‘īn’s admiration of Ibn Rabī‘ appears to be due entirely to the merits—legal, literary, or calligraphic—of the document that Ibn Rabī‘ drew up. There may, however, be some metaphorical sous-entendre at play here, to the effect that the vessel is the symbolic container of esoteric knowledge. Ibn Sab‘īn’s admiration of Ibn Rabī‘ is at least plausible given that the latter was one of Ḥarrālī’s philosophically-minded students as well as an active transmitter of Ḥarrālī’s Sufi legacy (tarīqah) as discussed above. Still, the exact nature of Ibn Sab‘īn-Ibn Rabī‘ relationship remains ambiguous.

In his ‘Unwān-based survey of the intellectual topography of Bijāyah, Urvoy makes a number of overgeneralized inferences about the particular faction founded and inspired by Ḥarrālī, and spearheaded thereafter by Ibn Rabī‘. On the one hand, Urvoy rightly identifies the Ḥarrālī-led tendency as one marked by an investment in a plurality of religious sciences, and not specialized in any one particular one (usūl al-fiqh, kalām, or Sufism) like most other Bijāyan

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420 Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 58. I have not been able to locate any references to Ibn Rabī’in Ibn Sab‘īn’s extant corpus.

421 It should be noted that, on the whole, the ‘Unwān’s treatment of Ibn Sab‘īn is plainly apologetic. Ghubrīnī seems acutely aware of, yet not entirely comfortable with, the esoteric nature of Ibn Sab‘īn’s teachings. Ghubrīnī, for example, repeatedly cites Ibn Sab‘īn’s penchant for the use of signs and symbols (alghāz, isharāt, rumūz). To my eyes, when the subject of Ibn Sab‘īn comes up in the ‘Unwān, especially in Ibn Sab‘īn’s own notice, it is almost as if Ghubrīnī’s own prose tries to mimic Ibn Sab‘īn’s famously coded and esoteric style of expression, as a means of both revealing and veiling the outlook of this controversial figure. It should also be noted that, in his Barnāmaj (‘Unwān, p. 360), in the section dealing with his reception of “dirāyah” sciences, Ghubrīnī claims to have been instructed in the doctrines of Ibn Sab‘īn, though without specifying by whom. Ibn Rabī‘ may have indeed been one such instructor, since he appears to be the only teacher of Ghubrīnī’s who, in the main body of the ‘Unwān, has any connection with Ibn Sab‘īn.
intellectual currants. Ḥarrālī’s group also encompassed in its purview other non-traditional disciplines like *adab* and philosophy. And Urvoys is also right to identify Ibn Rabī’ as the foremost representative of this trend in the period following Ḥarrālī’s exit from the city. But at the same time, Urvoys overstates the importance of Ibn Sab’īn’s admiration for Ibn Rabī’.

Perhaps Urvoy was led to overvalue Ibn Sab’īn’s praise of Ibn Rabī’ partly because of Ibn Sab’īn’s otherwise notorious reputation as a scathing critic of even the most illustrious Muslim thinkers—including, for example, Juwaynī and Ghazālī.422 More immediately relevant to the Bijāyan milieu is Ibn Sab’īn criticism of Abū Madyan. For during his sojourn in Bijāyah Ibn Sab’īn reportedly told his disciple Shushtarī: “If you seek Paradise, go and find Abū Madyan; if you seek the Lord of Paradise, come to me”.423

Citing Ibn Sab’īn’s twin identity as both mystic and “héritier des exigences rationelles almohades”, Urvoys lets himself become convinced that this figure’s endorsement of Ibn Rabī’ can only mean that the philosophically-inclined group led by the Ibn Rabī’ (and originally inspired by Ḥarrālī) must have held negative views of, and defined itself over and against, the older and more traditional legacy of Abū Madyan. Overall, however, the evidence is too thin to support such a definitive claim. We simply don’t know enough about the nature of the Ibn Sab’īn-Ibn Rabī’ relationship, except for the ambiguously-worded claims in the ‘Unwān that

422 Ibn Sab’īn characterizes Ibn Sīnā as “an obscurantist (*mumawwih*), a sophist (*musafsi’t*), maximally clangorous (*kāthīr al-ṭanṭānah*), minimally utile (*qalīl al-fā’idah*); Ghazālī as “a mouthpiece free of explicative power (*lisānun dūna bayan*), a voice devoid of speech (*ṣāwtun dūna kālām*)…whose grasp of the ancient sciences (*al-‘ulūm al-qadīmah*) is more tenuous than a spider’s thread”. Mazīdī, *Mawsū’at*, pp. 193-4.

423 Maqqarī, *Nafḥ*, vol. 2, p. 185. See also Ibn Sab’īn’s notice in Munāwī (*Kawākib*, vol. 2, p. 441) where, in addition to the above anecdote, Ibn Sab’īn is also reported to have said: “Abū Madyan is a servant [through] good works (*‘abdu ‘amalin*), and we are servants [who bask in] divine presence (*‘abīdu ḥaḍratīn*)

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cannot be corroborated, as far as I am aware, with references to Ibn Rabī’ in Ibn Sab’īn’s corpus. Ibn Rabī’ himself left behind no meaningful corpus that might give us a clear idea of what doctrines he professed.

Another reason why I take issue with this particular generalization by Urvoy is that it has the effect of distorting a far more important and readily verifiable aspect of Ibn Rabī’ as a scholar, namely, his role as a synthesizer. Ibn Rabī’ functioned as mediator, not only in Bijāyan society at large, but also acted as storehouse of the memory of multiple generations of the city’s scholars. A close reading of the ‘Unwān reveals that Ibn Rabī’ is one of Ghubrīnī’s main informers with respect to the most illustrious figures of the early generation of scholars, including Abū Madyan, Masīlī, Ibn Kharrāṭ, and Uṣūlī. Much of the luster attached to these figures in the ‘Unwān—in terms of both their scholarly and/or spiritual stature—owes directly to anecdotes related on the authority of Ibn Rabī’. Of course, Ibn Rabī’ who comes to rest in 675/1276 but whose birthdate is unknown, would probably have been too young to be connected directly to any of these early figures, excepting possibly Uṣūlī (d. 612/1215).424

Whatever Ibn Rabī’’s sources, the key point to retain here is the role of Ibn Rabī’ as repository for the lore of preceding generations of scholars. And, although these scholars are eventually cast by Ghubrīnī in a more or less uniformly positive light, they do in fact represent a broad ideological spectrum. This means that somewhere along the way the variegated legacies of these figures were coordinated, old ideological tensions were mitigated, and inter-disciplinary discord was harmonized. Now the ‘Unwān, as previously noted, exhibits a patently conciliatory

424 On the question of Ibn Rabī’’s sources, the ‘Unwān silent; Ḥarrālī is a possible candidate, but more likely Ibn Rabī’ gleaned his knowledge from a medley of sources, including possibly from his own father as well as from several of his other reputable and well-connected Bijāyan teachers ‘Alī ibn Abī Naṣr in particular.
approach to prosopography, a measure of which doubtless stems from Ghubrīnī’s own idiosyncratic initiative. But surely it has to also be a reflection of the mindset of some of Ghubrīnī’s direct mentors like Ibn Rabī’, who also happens to be one of the key sources of information for the ‘Unwān. Ibn Rabī’ was a figure whose own intellectual horizon subsumed a wide and inclusive range of disciplines. Ibn Rabī’ cannot have therefore been a fissure marker, as Urvoy seems to suggest, but on the contrary exercised an important “integrative” function, mediating not just on the level of his immediate community but also inter-generationally for Bijāyah’s intelligentsia; a mediator between different symbolic universes. As the primary mentor of Ibn Rabī’, I would argue that Ḥarrālī represents not just one figure among others whose legacy is processed and passed on, but also the principal source of the integrative quality itself.

In spite of his multi-disciplinary brilliance and his role as synthesizer, Ibn Rabī’ did not leave behind any written or otherwise tangible legacy. Aside from reproducing a segment of his mystical poem, Ghubrīnī credits Ibn Rabī’ with not a single title. This apparently light scholarly footprint is likely the result of a deliberate prioritization by Ibn Rabī’ of inter-personal relations, the face-to-face training of disciples, and oral modes of instruction. This is evident in an anecdote related in the ‘Unwān. When Ghubrīnī came to visit Ibn Rabī’ on his deathbed, he was told:

By God it’s not my death that concerns me, rather it’s what Plato (Aflāṭūn) said when his death was imminent and his companions gathered around him: By God, I am troubled not by my [imminent] death but rather by my dying and not having raised my students (wa-lam arqi aṣḥābī) to their fullest, rightful stations each according to their inner substance (ilá marāqīhim al-latī iqtaḍāhā sifātuhum wa-istāḥaqqatahā dhawātuhum).425

Though Ibn Rabī‘ laments that his life’s work is incomplete, clearly he always considered as his paramount duty the intellectual, moral and spiritual formation of his mentees. Rather than

focus on literary production, Ibn Rabī‘ appears to have sunk his energy instead into his students. Thus, his contribution to intellectual history, like so many other figures in Ḥarrālī’s orbit, appears minimal and is difficult to define because his endeavors played out primarily on an oral and inter-personal plane.

**Ibn Asāṭīr (d. after 670/1271)**

Another notable Bijāyan student of Ḥarrālī’s and also an esteemed friend of Ibn Rabī‘ was ‘Abū al-Ḥasan al-Milyānī, better known as Ibn Asāṭīr. Besides being knowledgeable in jurisprudence and theology, Ibn Asāṭīr is also described by Ghubrīnī as a sage (*ḥakīm*) who was deeply versed in philosophy (*ʿulūm al-ḥikmah*). Despite this, the sole biographical notice available on this figure is in the ‘*Unwān*, and it is a fairly short notice at that. The most remarkable fact cited about Ibn Asāṭīr is that he taught Ibn Sīnā’s *al-Ishārāt wa-al-tanbīhāt* to a select group of students. We may therefore assume with reasonable certainty that Ibn Asāṭīr had previously been among the attendees of Ḥarrālī’s lectures on Ibn Sīnā. It is also likely, by the same token, that Ḥarrālī taught an even wider selection of Ibn Sīnā’s corpus than just the *Najāh*, as recalled by Ibn Rabī‘. And if indeed Ḥarrālī was responsible for incepting a tradition in some Bijāyan circles of reading Ibn Sīnā’s philosophical works, it makes it all the more unlikely that Ḥarrālī’s original intent was purely to reject the subject.

Ibn Asāṭīr is said to have been one of Ḥarrālī’s closest spiritual disciples and for a time under the latter’s apprenticeship went through a phase of extreme isolation and renunciation. While he partly made his living as a notary and administrator, Ibn Asāṭīr was generally given to asceticism and lived modestly. He would insist on performing certain household chores in

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person, like for example delivering dough to the communal oven (
\textit{al-farrān}). Though below his dignity by social standards, Ibn \textit{Asāṭīr} purposely performed such tasks as part of a spiritual method of cultivating humility and riding himself of arrogance (\textit{al-barā’ah min al-kitāb}). The cases of Ibn \textit{Asāṭīr} and Ibn Rabī‘ demonstrate that among Ḥarrālī’s students philosophical speculation was not merely an abstract exercise but part and parcel of whole way of life that included an earnest ethical component and an emphasis on spiritual self-cultivation.

Since Ibn \textit{Asāṭīr} and Ibn Rabī‘ are the only two philosophically-inclined students of Ḥarrālī that we can positively identify, it is worth mentioning before moving on to other students the enigmatic figure of Taqīy al-dīn al-Mawṣilī\textsuperscript{427} (d. after 630/1232). This was not someone whom Ḥarrālī tutored, but the two evidently crossed paths inBIJAYAH because the ‘Unwān has preserved statements by Ḥarrālī praising Mawṣilī. This figure was regarded as an illiterate sage (ḥakīm \textit{ummi}), one to whom God revealed wisdom without formal intellectual training (\textit{min ghayr iktisāb}). He was apparently connected to the founder of the Illuminationist school of philosophy, Shihāb al-Dīn Yahyā al-Suhrawardī al-Maqtūl (d. 587/1191). According to Ghubrīnī, Suhrawardī apparently said of Mawṣilī:

\begin{quote}
“The meanings that I have set down in the book [\textit{Hikmat al-ishrāq}] were revealed to him [directly] (\textit{kushifat la-hu tilka al-ma’anī al-la‘īf athbat tu fi al-kitāb}), [it was only afterwards that] he sought the rational proofs [behind these meanings] and found them (\textit{talaba al-burhān ‘alayhā fa-wajadahā}).”
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{427} Taqīy al-dīn al-Mawṣilī. Besides the ‘Unwān, I have not found any other biographical source that mentions this figure. The information supplied by Ghubrīnī is quite short on basic biographical facts, providing neither a date of death nor even a full name. On the timing of Mawṣilī’s sojourn in BIJAYAH, Ghubrīnī only indicates that he “arrived in BIJAYAH during the time (\textit{fi muddat}) of Shaykh Abī al-Ḥaṣan al-Ḥarrālī.” Ghubrīnī, \textit{Unwān}, pp. 180-2, nr. 35. Kh. 2011, p. 99. See also Urvoy, \textit{Structuration}, p. 100, 1f.
For his part, Ḥarrālī reportedly described Mawṣilī as one of the pillars of wisdom (\(\text{min } \text{aṣāfīn al-ḥikmah} \)) and compared him to Quss ibn Sāʿīdah\(^\text{428}\) and Zayd ibn Āmru ibn Nufayl\(^\text{429}\)—two figures of the pre-Islamic era who are considered monotheists (\(\text{ḥunafāʿ} \)) and are celebrated for their sagacity, among other things. There are also several noteworthy parallels between Mawṣilī and the iconic figure of early Maghribī Sufism Abū Yīʿzā (d. 572/1177), whom Ḥarrālī probably never met but whom he would have been familiar with both through the intermediary of Abū al-Ṣabr al-Fihrī and also from having lived and studied in the atmosphere of late 12th century Fez. Like Mawṣilī, Abū Yīʿzā who was also regarded as a sage who could articulate Sufi doctrine even though he was illiterate and had had no formal training.\(^\text{430}\)

Also similar to Abū Yaʿzā is the fact that Mawṣilī was apparently an itinerant sage who, while practicing extreme forms of asceticism, wandered the earth so as to “gaze upon God’s dominion” (\(\text{qaṣduhu}...\text{al-taṭallu}´ \text{‘alā malakūt Allāh} \)).\(^\text{431}\) By the time he arrived in Bijāyah, he

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\(^{428}\) Quss ibn Sāʿīdah al-Iyādī (d. ca. 600?) was a semi-legendary figure of Arab antiquity and regarded as one of the greatest orators of all time. He is also seen as a pre-Islamic sage, one of the ḥunafāʿ who upheld monotheism and believed in the resurrection. In a hadīth, the Prophet is reported to have said of him: “he will be resurrected as part of a single [Muslim] ummah (\(\text{yuḥshar ummatan wāḥidah} \))”. See Pellat, EI2, “Ḳuss b. Sāʿida”; Mohammad Said “Ḳuss b. Sāʿīda al-Iyādī” in Bulletin d’études orientales, T. 60 (2011), pp. **1**–**1**.

\(^{429}\) Zayd ibn Āmru ibn Nufayl. In the Islamic tradition he considered to be a ḥanīf and a monotheist. He did not live to witness the Prophet Muḥammad begin his mission, but his son Saʿīd ibn Zayd was one of the early converts to Islam. Ibn Hishām, al-Ṣīrah al-nabawīyah, vol. 1, pp. 253-262. Dhahabi, Siyar aʿlām al-mubalāʿ, al-Ṣīrah vol. 1, pp. 76-80.

\(^{430}\) Harrālī’s comparison of Mawṣilī to figures from the pre-Islamic era also brings to mind the fact that Abū Yaʿzā’s hermitage at Tāghiyāh in the Middle Atlas was apparently built on the site of an ancient cult center. According to Cornell: “Soon after their occupation of Morocco in 1912, French investigators reported finding a circle of megaliths near this village, indicating that Tāghiyāḥ had been revered as a holy place long before the advent of Islam.” Cornell, Realm, 71-2.

\(^{431}\) For more than twenty-five years, Abū Yaʿzā reportedly wandered alone through the uninhabited regions of the Far Maghrib, subsisting on plants and befriending wild animals. Commenting on the way in which Abū Yaʿzā is depicted in ‘Azaft’s Duʿāmat al-yaqīn, Cornell writes: “Like the lions and serpents who befriend, inform, and protect him, this saint is depicted as a wild creature of mountain (Ber. adrār)
had allegedly visited every known province in the Mashriq—including Norman Sicily, the Sudan, and the lands of the Turks and Tartars. The Maghrib was the last region of the known world that he had not yet explored. After a stay in Bijāyah he continued his westward journey and was never heard from again.

**al-Qaṣrī**

Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qaṣrī is another one of several relatively obscure figures from Bijāyah for whom Ghubrīnī is our only source of information. We are not given a death date for Qaṣrī nor any details about his early education. Given, however, that he was not one of Ghubrīnī’s teachers, perhaps he died prior to Ghubrīnī’s coming of age circa 1250. Adding weight to this hypothesis is the fact that Qaṣrī is said to have been one of Ḥarrālī’s intimate disciples; thus he may have been one of the more senior of Ḥarrālī’s students. Ghubrīnī’s informant on Qaṣrī, whoever he was, certainly held him in high esteem. Lavished with titles of praise like *al-ʿārif al-ʿābid* and *al-zāhid al-waliy*, Qaṣrī was reportedly advanced in the science of *taṣawwuf* and a

and forest (Ber. *lghabt*)—a liminal being, impervious to domestication, whose potency is accentuated by the fact that his abode lies beyond the bounds of civilization.” Cornell, *Realm*, p. 72; see also Way, p. 26.

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432 Mawṣilī reportedly visited Sicily during the reign of Frederic II and was summoned to court for a debate with Frederic’s priests over the relative merits of the prophets Jesus and Muḥammad. Mawṣilī consented but with one condition: that the debate be free of religious partisanship and that the two parties seek the objective truth together in good faith. Knowing they would be unable to remain impartial, his hosts canceled the debate. Still, Mawṣilī was apparently well treated until his departure. Also in “land of the Christians” (*bilād al-naṣārā*), Mawṣilī’s Christian hosts once challenged him to an ascetic contest, to see if he could bear the rigors endured by Jesus who, he was informed, used to fast (*kāna yuwāsil*) forty straight days. Mawṣilī was set up in a room and was assigned a servant who would bring him water to make his ablutions. Upon emerging from his successful forty-day fast, Mawṣilī asked his hosts if they would like to see him continue fasting for an additional forty-days. At that point, the priests asked that their king gently let Mūṣilī go on his way, lest he corrupt the local population’s faith in Jesus (*li-ālā yuṣīd ’alayhim millatahum wa-i’tiqādihim fī ʿĪsā*).

433 *lam yu’lam la-hu ba’d khabar, wa-lā ẓahara min hadīthihi athar.*

master in the way of ascetic abstention (*inqīṭā’*). Qaṣrī’s teaching sessions were very popular and he is particularly remembered for his perceptive insights into Qushayrī’s *Risālah*.

Qaṣrī was also competent in other areas such as *fiqh*, *uṣūl*, and Arabic. Ghubrīnī mentions that an unspecified dispute (*waqa’a kalām*) occurred between Qaṣrī and some other judges (*quḍāt*) of Bijāyah. Qaṣrī himself was offered various legal posts (*manāṣib al-‘udūl wa-al-qaḍā’*) though he never accepted. When polite refusal proved ineffective, Qaṣrī resorted to guile. For example, when he was pressured to accept the position of qāḍī, Qaṣrī explained to the sitting qāḍī that he planned to draw huge sums of money from the treasury so as to expand his personal library with books which he would need to consult before delivering verdicts. Upon hearing this, his would-be employers withdrew their offer. Although Qaṣrī’s story can be read within a Sufi narrative, it also dovetails with a long established trope in *tabaqāt* literature of Maghribī jurists—many not connected to *taṣawwuf*—who refused to assume the official role of qāḍī due to modesty (*ḥayā’*) and pious scrupulousness (*wara’*).

**Ibn Makhlūf**

Ibn Makhlūf represents probably the most legist oriented figure who studied under Ḥarrālī in Bijāyah. Born in Tilimsān, Ibn Makhlūf moved early to Bijāyah where he received an education

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under prominent ‘ulamā’ such as ‘Alī Ibn Abī Naṣr (d. 652/1254) and his student Ibn Muḥriz436 (d. 655/1257), a traditionist, legist, and man of letters of Andalusian origin who played a central role in Bijāyah’s tight-knit community of Andalusian scholars. Ibn Makhlūf also studied under Abū al-‘Abbās al-Milyānī437 (d. 644/1246). These figures may be understood as conventional ‘ulamā’ in the sense that, although well-rounded and well-respected, their competence is limited to some combination of the standard traditional subjects of ḥadīth, fiqh, and sometimes adab. In effect, Ibn Makhlūf himself follows this pattern. He is remembered as a traditionist and is cited by Ghubrīnī as one of his ḥadīth teachers.438 He is also a distinguished legist whom Ghubrīnī refers to as a repository of knowledge of the Mālikī madh`hab (khizānat Mālik). As a faqīḥ, Ibn Makhlūf was consulted (kāna mushāwaran) by higher-ranking judges. He also held multiple legal posts such as a backup judge in family matters (qaḍā’ al-ankāh) in Bijāyah. Later he was


437 Abū al-‘Abbās Ahmad ibn ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Abd al-Jabbāral-Matūsī al-Milyānī. Originally from the same town as Ḥarrālī’s student Abū al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Imrān al-Milyānī, albeit not apparently related to the latter directly. Abū al-‘Abbās completed much of his education in the Mashrīq then returned to Bijāyah where spent the better part of his teaching career specializing in jurisprudence. He was one of only a few scholars who taught Mālikī furū’ during this period. Milyānī was particularly knowledgeable of ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Tha’labī’s al-Talqīn and wrote a commentary on it (taqyīd) which Ghubrīnī has compared to the famous commentary by al-Māzarī (d. 536/1141). Milyānī was summoned and received at court in Tūnis by the Ḥafṣīd amīr Abū Zakariyā’1st. Besides ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Makhlūf, Milyānī also shares with Ḥarrālī another common student: ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq ibn Rabī’. Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, pp. 188-9, nr. 39.

438 See Ghubrīnī’s barnāmaj in ‘Unwān, p. 360.
a full qāḍī (wuliya al-qaḍā’ mustağillan) in the cities of Biskrah, Constantine, and Algiers (al-Jazā’ir), which is where he finally came to rest.

Ibn Makhlūf was also a tireless educator who for a long time ran three, well-attended teaching sessions daily. Only in later years did he reduce his daily teaching load to two sessions. Among the pupils that he instructed was Ghubrīnī who recalls studying under Ibn Makhlūf’s direction such seminal works as the Muwatta’ of Mālik and the Kitāb al-tafrī’ of Ibn al-Jallāb (d. 378/988), a Mālikī scholar from Baghdaḏ. Other works studied include Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī’s (fl. 10th century) Risālah as well as Abū al-Ḥasan al-Lakhmī’s (d. 478/1085) al-Tabṣirah. Ibn Makhlūf’s command of the Mālikī school was respected enough that he was urged by admirers to contribute to the legal literature. Ibn Makhlūf apparently refused. In Ghubrīnī’s view, had Ibn Makhlūf composed any works of fiqh, he would not have strayed far from the methodological framework of the Qarawiyyīn school. On the essential points, Ibn Makhlūf deemed the teachings already laid out by the early authorities of the madh‘hab to be sufficient (ra’á fi-mā allafah u ahl al-madh‘hab kifāyah).

Ibn Makhlūf’s profoundly legalistic orientation is perhaps best epitomized by the account of his dream-vision of the Prophet, an experience he often related to his students during fiqh seances. Ibn Makhlūf seems to have taken this rare and deeply valued occasion as an opportunity to verify a (seemingly minor) legal point:

I [Ibn Makhlūf] said to him: “O Messenger of God, how didst thou countermand on the issue of the two hands (kayfa raja’Ta fi qaḍiyat dhī al-yadayn), is it seated or standing (hal jālisan aw qā’iman)?” He turned to me after I tugged at his clothes and said to me smiling: “standing, rather (bal qā’iman).”

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439 Ghubrīnī, ’Unwān, p. 64. Another possible reading of Ibn Makhlūf’s line might be: “…how didst thou countermand on the issue of the two hands, were you seated or were you standing?”
Besides citing Ḥarrālī as one of Ibn Makhlūf’s teachers, the ‘Unwān fails to specify the nature of this tutorship. Given Ibn Makhlūf’s specialization in legal matters, it is possible that his education under Ḥarrālī involved some fiqh. More likely, however, Ibn Makhlūf received the bulk of his legal training at the hands of the previously mentioned figures of Milyānī, Ibn Abī Naṣr, and Ibn Muḥriz. During Ḥarrālī’s sessions, Ibn Makhlūf probably absorbed more esoteric subject matters like taṣawwuf and philosophy, even if, according the ‘Unwān at least, he never specialized in those areas.

Yet it is worth noting that, in some ijāzah and fahrasah-type sources from later periods, like Mintawrī’s Fahrasah and Fāsī’s (d. 1134/1722) al-Minaḥ al-bādiyah—valuable texts for the study of the intellectual history of the Maghrib, but still barely explored—Ibn Makhlūf is cited as a primary transmitter of Ḥarrālī’s legacy.⁴⁴⁰ Which works were transmitted is not specified in these source but the chain of transmission of Ḥarrālī’s works is found alongside those of notable Sufi figures like Qushayrī, Ibn al-‘Arīf, Ibn Ḥirzihim, Abū Ya‘zā, Abū Madyan, Ibn ‘Arabī, and Ibn Sab‘īn—that is to say, figures primarily known for their contributions to Sufism rather than their legal expertise. This context strongly suggests, therefore, that Ibn Makhlūf was responsible for the transmission of a plenary portion of Ḥarrālī’s corpus, including his Sufi legacy, and not solely any works Ḥarrālī may have authored on fiqh, which in any case were probably not numerous and none of which, tellingly, appear extant. In his Barnāmaj, it will be recalled that Ghubrīnī names only Ibn Rabī‘ and Ibn Maḥjūbah as transmitters of Ḥarrālī’s Sufi teachings. The ‘Unwān’s omission of Ibn Makhlūf is all the more surprising since, according to the two aforementioned fahrasahs, the next immediate recipient of the Ḥarrālīan heritage is none other than Ghubrīnī, followed by the famous Shams al-Dīn ibn Jābir al-Wādī Āshī (d. 1345/6). Likely

at play here is one of Ghubrīnī’s familiar lapses of accounting. But in all this, there is also the suggestion that Ibn Makhlūf was more of a passive transmitter of Ḥarrālī’s legacy.

**al-Ghassānī**\(^{441}\) (d. after 682/1283)

Ghassānī was a native of Algiers (al-Jazā’ir) where he studied under the jurist Abū ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd al-Nūr al-Jazā’irī and the traditionist and grammarian Abū ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mandās. Ghassānī was a co-pupil of Abū ‘Alī ibn Rabī’, both during his early career in Algiers and later in Bijāyah under Ḥarrālī. However, Ghubrīnī does not explicitly mention that Ghassānī attended Ḥarrālī’s sessions on Ibn Sīnā or that he was interested in philosophy. What he did share with Ibn Rabī’ was a talent for calligraphy (ṣinā’at al-wathā’iq). Ghassānī was also a gifted poet and an all-round belletrist who was involved in drafting various kinds of official documents for the chancellery.\(^{442}\) In Bijāyah, he also spent a long time as judge (takhaṭṭa bi-al-qāḍā’) and was known for emulating the methodology of Saḥnūn\(^{443}\), the famous 3rd century chief justice (qāḍī al-quḍāt) of the Maghrib.

One of the often-cited saintly powers (karāmāt) of Ḥarrālī was his ability to foretell the future fates of some of his students. In the case of Ghassānī, Ḥarrālī had apparently foretold that he would face a severe trial toward the end of his life. For this reason, Ghassānī was known to frequently sing the following verse:

O would that my poetry—where, how, and when (fa-yā-layta shīrī aynā aw-kayfa aw-matā)

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\(^{442}\) kāna yunshi’ al-bayā‘at wa-al-khaṭab wa-al-katb al-ṣūlūnī, inshā’an wa-jawāban

\(^{443}\) ‘Abd al-Salām ibn Sa‘īd ibn Ḥabīb al-Tanūkhī (d. 240 AH).
could predict, that which cannot but inevitably be (yuqaddiru mā lā budda an sayakān)

According to Ghubrīnī, Ghassānī continued singing that verse through the years in expectancy of the trial “until it was ordained and came to be (ḥattā quddira wa-kān)”. But Ghubrīnī gives us no further details as to what Ḥarrālī actually predicted or what ultimately transpired. However, the historian Zarkashī mentions Ghassānī’s involvement in an episode of civil disturbance that occurred in Bijāyah some forty years after Ḥarrālī’s death. In 1282, when Ghassānī was the qāḍī of Bijāyah, he was called upon to placate an angry mob that had congregated in the city’s grand mosque. Whatever Ghassānī may have said, his words unwittingly had the opposite effect, fueling the mob’s anger further. In the ensuing commotion, Ghassānī’s son—who happened to be in tow that day—was massacred near the mosque’s miḥrāb. Ghassānī himself was initially imprisoned in Bijāyah before being exiled back to his native Algiers.

444 Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 112. In a few biographical sources, including contemporary ones, these lines are mistakenly attributed to Ḥarrālī.


446 This incident plays out against a backdrop of turbulent political upheaval in Ifrīqiyya in the early 1280s. Widespread crop failure in 1280 and the reluctance of the Bedouins to pay taxes prompted the Ḥafṣid amīr Abī Iṣḥāq to dispatch military units to collect taxes in the fall of 1282. Concurrently, a figure named Ibn Abī ‘Umārah was building a messianic reputation around him, eventually amassing enough military strength to wrest control of southern Ifrīqiyya from the Ḥafṣids. In December of 1282, Ibn Abī ‘Umārah—labelled as a pretender and a usurper (al-daʿī or al-dāʿī) by Ḥafṣid historians—attacked the Ḥafṣid capital of Tunis, putting Abū Ishāq to flight. It is worth noting that after the fall of Tūnis the Ḥafṣid finance minister Abū Bakr Ibn Khaldūn—great grandfather of the famous historian—is captured and tortured to death. In the early months of 1283, the Sultan took refuge in Bijāyah, hoping to set up a base from which to regain power. However, his son Abū Fāris, then the city’s governor, forced him to abdicate. Abū Fāris subsequently received the allegiance of the elite of Bijāyah as the new head of the Ḥafṣid dynasty. In the spring, Abū Fāris rode out with an army to face the usurper on the battlefield. The Ḥafṣid army, however, was soundly routed and Abū Fāris was himself killed in the fighting. When news of this defeat reached the city of Bijāyah, its loyalist population became agitated and congregated in the city’s great mosque. Zarkashi, Tārīkh al-dawlatayn, pp. 46-50. Brunschvig, Berbérie Orientale, vol. 1, pp. 85-6. Valérian, Bougie, p. 81. Rouighi, Emirate, pp. 38-41.
It is not clear from Zarkashī’s account what exactly provoked the mob to attack Ghassānī and his son. Perhaps because he was not a native of the city, Bijāyans regarded him as an outsider who should not have meddled in local political affairs. What’s also remarkable is that in Zarkashī’s account of the incident, no mention is made of Ḥarrālī’s prophecy. In fact, Tārīkh al-dawlatayn makes no mention of Ḥarrālī at all. As for Ghassānī, he is only mentioned on this one occasion, which suggests that his involvement in politics had been minimal, at least up until this tragic episode.

al-Qalīṭī\(^{447}\) (d. 673/1274)

Remembered primarily as an accomplished poet, grammarian (nahawi) and linguist (lughawi), Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qalīṭī came from a family native to Qal’at Banī Ḥammād, where his grandfather had been a qādī. His early education took place in Algiers under Ibn Mandās. Later he moved to Bijāyah where he studied under several scholars including the Andalusian-educated linguist ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn al-Saṭṭāḥ \(^{448}\) (d. 629/1231 or 1232) and the feted traditionist Ibn Muḥriz (d. 655/1257). As Urvoynotes, these Andalusian masters were probably responsible for instilling Qalīṭī with a literary orientation.\(^{449}\)

But an even more likely source of influence in this regard is the figure of Abū al-Rabī’ al-Ḥimyarī\(^{450}\) (565/1170-634/1237) —also known as “Kathīr”—a celebrated Valencian traditionist

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\(^{448}\) See his notice in Ghubrīnī, ’Unwān al-dirāyah, pp. 263-4, nr. 82.

\(^{449}\) Urvoyn, Structuration, p. 105.

\(^{450}\) Abū al-Rabī’ Sulaymān ibn Mūsā ibn Sālim al-Ḥimyarī al-Kalī’ī (aka. Kathīr). Born near Murcia and spent his career in Valencia. Author of numerous literary works. None appear to be extant. A notorious critic, he even took aim at Ghazālī’s Iḥyāʾ saying: “When did the religious sciences die such that they need to be resuscitated?” At one point he was a judicial official as well as a preacher (khaṭīb) at the grand
and litterateur who at some point sojourned and taught in Bijāyah. Kathīr is another
contemporary peer of Ḥarrālī which the latter reportedly harbored a great deal of admiration and
respect. In Kathīr’s notice in the ‘Unwān, Ḥarrālī is quoted as praising his level of articulateness
(bayān), deeming his poetry as comparable to that of the early Arabs, which could be held up as
“linguistic evidence” (yuḥṭajj bi-shi’rīh). Even if Ḥarrālī himself bequeathed only a modest
poetic corpus, his reported accolade towards Kathīr suggests that his judgement and capacity for
aesthetic literary appreciation was highly regarded.

Ḥarrālī himself may have also been a potential source of influence on Qal’ī’s literary
orientation, especially insofar as it was bent towards mysticism. In fact, it was Ḥarrālī who gave
Qal’ī the lifelong nickname al-adīb. During one of Ḥarrālī’s sessions, presumably in the city of
Bijāyah, the following lines were brought up for discussion:

O soul! O gardener! Harvest jasmine from the field (janān ya jannān, īnī min al-bustān al-yāsamīn)
But by the sanctity of the All-Merciful, leave the basil for the lovers (wa-utrūk al-rayḥān, bi-ḥurmat
al-Rahmān, ʿīl-āṭāshīqīn)

Remarkably, the above lines constitute the final couplet of longer poem in the Andalusian
strophic style (muwashshaḥ) and appears to be of the authorship of Ibn ‘Arabī, who was one
of the first Sufi poets to employ such a style.⁴⁵¹ The circumstances by which it found its way into

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mosque of Valencia. He was also a valiant holy warrior and was slain in a battle near Valencia. Before his
death he famously berated his fellow comrades as they retreated: “Is it from paradise that you flee?” (a-
‘an al-jannah tufirrūn?). An extensive list of his teachers, students, attributed works, and more
biographical references on Kathīr can be found in the long notice devoted to him in Ibn ‘Abd al-
Mālik, Dhayl, vol 2. pp. 81-92, nr. 203. See also Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, pp. 279-81, nr. 87. Dhahābī, Siyar, vol. 23,
100-103, nr. 290.

⁴⁵¹ In the ‘Unwān’s account of how Qal’ī earned the nickname “al-Adīb”, Ghubrīnī only cites this
particular couplet, not the full poem. Nor does he who the author of the poem was, stating merely that: “In
one of Ḥarrālī seances, there was mention of what the man had said (jarā bayna yaday al-Shaykh dhikr
mā qālahu al-rajul). The full poem, however, is cited by Maqqārī in his notice on Ibn ‘Arabī, though no
one of Ḥarrālī’s sessions is unclear, as Ibn ‘Arabī’s presumptive sojourns in Bijāyah—circa 1193 and 1200—do not seem to overlap with Ḥarrālī’s around 1230. At any rate, after several students voiced their opinions on the metaphorical significance of jasmine compared to basil, Qal‘ī finally suggested that the author of the poem was referring to the more enduring value (dawām al-‘ahd) of the basil plant, compared to the ephemerality of jasmine flowers. Delighted by his student’s insight, and presumably seeing in him a man of culture and refined literary taste, Ḥarrālī called Qal‘ī an adīb (“anta adīb”), a nickname which permanently stuck.

Qal‘ī spent the better part of his career in Bijāyah. In his sessions he would address complex linguistic problems in the fields of tafsīr, hadīth, and obscure verses of poetry (abyāt al-gharīb). With his students, who were numerous and sharp-minded, Qal‘ī apparently adopted a remarkably liberal pedagogical style, giving them free rein to critique his works and challenge his ideas. The titles of the works attributed to al-Qal‘ī seem to focus mainly on grammar; for example his propaedeutic sounding title al-Muwaddih fi ‘ilm al-nahw and his Hidq al-‘uyūn fi tanqīh al-Qānūn, a commentary on Abū Mūsá al-Jazūlī’s (d. ca. 610/) introduction to the study of Arabic grammar titled al-Qānūn and also known as Muqaddimat al-Jazūlī. Qal‘ī also authored


452 These could have been lines which Ibn ‘Arabī composed in Bijāyah and kept circulating among the city’s literary elite. Or perhaps Ḥarrālī received these lines through correspondence with Ibn ‘Arabī.

453 kānat yaduhu wa-yad al-ṭalabah fī kutubih sawā‘, lā mizyah la-hu ‘alayhim fī hā.

454 al-Jazūlī hails from a tribe from the South of Morocco. He studied in Marrakesh as well as in the East. In Cairo he attended the seances of the famous lexicologist Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh ibn Barrī and the traditionist Abū Muḥammad ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh. Jazūlī returned to the West and taught grammar on both sides of the straights, including in Almeria and Bijāyah. In Algiers, al-Jazūlī taught his Qānūn to Ibn Mandās. See Ben Cheneb, EI2, “al-Ḍiẓẓūlī”.

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Nashr al-khaṭīfī fī mushkilāt Abī ‘Alī, a commentary on Abū ‘Alī al-Fārisī’s (288-377/919-987) al-Īḍāḥ (on syntax and morphology) of which Qal‘ī was famously fond.

As he states in his barnāmaj, Ghubrīnī studied under Qal‘ī for the better part of a decade and qualifies him as the most erudite linguist he had ever met. Some of the other works Ghubrīnī remembers studying under Qal‘ī include Kitāb Sibawayh;456 Ibrāhīm al-Ḥuṣrī’s (d. 413/1022) Zahr al-ādāb wa-thamar al-albāb; Zamarkhsharī’s al-Mufassal fī al-naḥw, a compendium on Arabic grammar; and the poetry of figures like Abū Tammām Ḥabīb ibn ‘Aws (d. 231/845 or 232/846) and al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/955). Qal‘ī’s own isnād for many of these works do not trace back to Ḥarrālī but rather to other teachers. For example, Qal‘ī’s isnād for the works of Sibawayh and al-imām al-Māzarī (d. 536/1141) trace back to Ibn Muḥriz.

Qal‘ī began composing his own poetry in the early 630’s/1230’s and continued until his death in 673/1274. Regrettably, his poetry was apparently written down piecemeal by many hands over the years. Ghubrīnī estimates that, had there been an effort to compile Qal‘ī’s diwān, it would have amounted to several volumes. The samples of his poetry which are preserved in his notice in the ‘Unwān evoke religious and ascetic themes, including devotional praise of the Prophet. Known for composing his poetry in the style of Ḥabīb ibn ‘Aws, Qal‘ī famously maintained a running correspondence with his friend Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Jazā’īrī458 (fl. ca. 1250),

455 Weipert, EI3, “al-Fārisī, Abū ‘Alī”.

456 See also Ghubrīnī’s Barnāmaj in ‘Unwān, pp. 358, 387-9.

457 Abū Ḥusnāq Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Abī ibn Ṭamīm al-Ḥuṣrī al-Qayrawānī. His Zahr al-ādāb was part of the ādāb curriculum in North Africa and Spain. See EI2 Bouyahia “al-Ḥuṣrī”.

458 Abū ‘Abd Allah Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Arifī al-Jazā’īrī. He was also competent in jurisprudence and at one point held the position of Shaykh kutubat al-diwan in Bijayah. See ‘Unwān al-dirāyah, pp. 337-40, nr. 104.
another notable poet in the region who, for his part, liked to compose poetry in the style of al-
Mutanabbī.

**Lesser-known Bijāyan Students**

In addition to the above mentioned figures, the ‘Unwān also makes a curt reference or two to
a handful of other Bijāyan students of Ḥarrālī. Ghubrīnī tells that, for example, the jurisconsult
and belletrist ‘Abd Allāh Ibn ‘Ulwān⁴⁵⁹ (fl. ca. 1275) attended Ḥarrālī’s sessions at a very young
age and considered himself a student of the shaykh in a nominal sense (*laqiyyahu ru’yat ‘ayn wa-
tabarruk*). In later years, Ibn ‘Ulwān would be tutored by Ḥarrālī’s other student: Ibn Makhlūf.

More cotemporaneous students of Ḥarrālī include ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Faqīr⁴⁶⁰, known also as
khādim al-fuqārā’. His *laqab* suggests that he was one of those individuals who found fulfilment
in the performance of menial work in the service of Sufi shaykhs and their immediate circle of
disciples. Another figure mentioned is ‘Abd al-Majīd ibn Surāqah⁴⁶¹ who was apparently part of
Ḥarrālī’s inner circle. On his deathbed, Ḥarrālī reportedly said: “God has promised that I would
have…twenty-four companions (*aṣḥāb*).” He then reportedly invoked the names of all of them
and prayed for them. He then specified that four in particular possessed special powers of
supplication that should be sought (*iltamisū minhum al-duʾā’*). Ibn Surāqah is the only one
among these four who is identified in the ‘Unwān.


⁴⁶⁰ Mentioned in the notice of Ḥarrālī in Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, pp. 151-2. See also the comments in Kh.
2011, p. 98.

⁴⁶¹ Fakhr al-Dīn Abū al-Ṭāhir ‘Abd al-Majīd Ibn Surāqah. This figure has some circumstantial similarities
with, but is probably distinct from, the *faqīh-sūfī* rector of Cairo’s Kāmilīyah madrasah, Muḥyī al-Dīn
Abū Bakr Muḥammad Ibn Surāqah al-Anṣārī al-Andalusī al-Shāṭiḥī (d. 662/1263-4) who was a disciple
of Abū al-Najīb al-Suhrawardī and, per some sources, of Ibn ‘Arabī as well. Abū al-Ṭāhir is mentioned in
the notice of Ḥarrālī in Ghubrīnī, *Unwān*, pp. 154-5; see also the comments in Kh. 2011, p. 98. On Abū
Finally, there is ‘Abd al-Wāḥid al-Kātib\(^{462}\), also known as Abū Dīnār, whose fame and fortune as a musician Ḥarrālī reportedly foretold. A conversation reported by Ghubrīnī has Ḥarrālī saying to members of his inner circle: “‘Abd al-Wāḥid shall study Mashriqī samā’ and return to the Maghrib [where he will] accompany his king and earn fame and fortune in this world.” According to Ghubrīnī, ‘Abd al-Wāḥid went on to become a reputed musician who performed at the court of Ḥafṣid ruler al-Mustanṣir (r. 647-675/1249-1277).

Assuming that ‘Abd al-Wāḥid was already honing his musical talents when he was Ḥarrālī’s student, it is conceivable that he indeed regaled his master with musical performances. Whether these were part of spiritual sessions of samā‘ is not known, but as some of his ḥikam attest, Ḥarrālī was a musical aesthete who perceived metaphysical significance in sound. As he observes in one of his aphorisms: “the reverberation of the [human] voice (tardīd al-ṣawt) with no consonants (bi-ghayr ḥurūf) interfuses the unseen with the seen (yamzij al-ghayb bi-al-shahādah).”\(^{463}\) And in a more instrumental sense: “The flute is the voice of the spirit (al-shabbābah ṣawt al-rūḥ), poetry the locution of the soul (al-shiʿr qawl al-nafs), and the tambourine the articulation of the revolving cosmos (al-ṭār nuṭq al-kawn al-dāʿir), a most plenary articulation (fa-huwa nuṭq tām).”\(^{464}\)

\(^{462}\) Mentioned in the notice of Ḥarrālī in Ghubrīnī, Unwān, pp. 151-2. See also the comments in Kh. 2011, p. 98.

\(^{463}\) Ḥarrālī, Ḥikam, p. 116, nr. 73.

\(^{464}\) Ḥarrālī, Ḥikam, p. 116, nr. 72.
CHAPTER SEVEN: Epistemological Miracles and Ecumenical Outreach

Divided into two main parts, this chapter constitutes something of a postscript to the previous vignette on Bijāyah. The first part examines Ḥarrālī’s *karāmāt*, the extra-ordinary feats attributed to him in later hagiography. The majority of Ḥarrālī *karāmāt* took place in Bijāyah and the richest source of these accounts is Ghubrīnī’s *ʿUnwān*, which bases itself on the direct testimony of some of Ḥarrālī’s Bijāyan disciples. We look at how these reports conjugate with the doctrinal expressions in Ḥarrālī’s corpus and the theoretical elaborations of Ibn ‘Arabī, and the wider hagiographical discourse in the pre-modern Maghrib. From a biographical standpoint, the particular way in which Ḥarrālī’s *karāmāt* manifested may have adversely effected his reform-minded career objectives.

The second part of the chapter examines the content of, and gives historical context to, a remarkable epistle by Ḥarrālī addressed to “father Ferrer”, the archbishop of the city of Tarragona in Aragon. The letter is a plea to free enslaved relatives of Ḥarrālī—not in exchange for ransom money, but solely in the name of Abrahamic fraternity. The eventual result of the episode was his expulsion from Bijāyah. The text of Ḥarrālī’s “Tarragona Letter” as well as a little of the episode’s backstory have been preserved in the *Sabk al-maqāl li-fakk al-ʿiqāl* (The melting of the discourse to untie the bonds), written by the Tunisian pro-Sufi biographer ʿAbd al-Wāḥid Ibn Ṭawwāḥ (d. after 718/1318).
**Harrālī’s karāmāt**

Thus far, one aspect of Ḥarrālī’s biography that has been occasionally alluded to, but not fully contextualized, is his body of karāmāt. In the hagiographical literature of the Maghrib, these extraordinary, miraculous, or simply memorable feats of saints are considered a manifestation of their earthly power (walāyah) which they possess by virtue of their proximity to God (wilāyah). Harrālī was famously known for one ability in particular, to foresee the future (firāsah). In the following section, our objective will be to contextualize Ḥarrālī’s vaticinal feats with respect to the broader medieval Islamic hagiographical discourse, taking care not to extract such karāmāt accounts from the endemic cultural logic in which they are embedded and which gives them meaning.465 We will also want to take note of any implications these accounts may portend for our understanding of Ḥarrālī’s professional career and his image in the later biographical tradition.

The preternatural abilities of Ḥarrālī constitute an integral part of his overall profile in the later biographical literature. Besides listing his scholarly achievements, many of Ḥarrālī’s biographers make a point of including at least one karāmah account. And the most abundant source of these hagiographic accounts, and probably the principal source for almost all the later ones, is Ghubrīnī’s ‘Unwān.466 Although a primarily prosopographical work that is focused on

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465 Our approach essentially accords with that articulated by Cornell when he points out that, “…as historians who assess the stories told by others, we must assume that our informants tell us the truth as they see it. This is not to say that we cannot interpret this information in our own way and even reconceptualize our informants’ appraisal of the truth as a product of social conditioning or rhetoric. But we must maintain the integrity of their beliefs in what we write about them. To say that premodern people believed in saintly miracles is to acknowledge that such miracles indeed existed—to premodern people. Whether or not we believe that miracles exist today is irrelevant to our understanding of what they meant to human beings in the past.” Cornell, Realm, xliii. See also pp. xxv-xliv.

466 Harrālī’s karāmāt in the ‘Unwān can be found pp. 147-55. Most of these accounts have been translated or paraphrased into French by Dermenghem in her article “Al-Hirrâlî: un çoufi du XIIIe siècle, érudit, métaphysicien, philosophe et poète”, in Annales de l’Institut d’études orientales, v. 7, 1948, pp. 39-53.
intellectual history, the ‘Unwān will at times wax hagiographical to highlight a handful of Bijāyan figures whose exceptional piety distinguishes them from their colleagues in the religious sciences and elevates them above the mundane fray of intellectual history. Ḥarrālī’s notice in the ‘Unwān contains a dozen-odd discrete anecdotes detailing various extraordinary feats. Together these accounts make up roughly half of the entire notice, which itself is already one of the longest of the 108 notices contained in the ‘Unwān. Indeed, considering just the raw number of karāmāt accounts and the textual space devoted to their recension, Ḥarrālī’s quite easily beats out all other figures mentioned in the ‘Unwān. This fact is certainly a reflection of the esteem accorded to Ḥarrālī by Ghubrīnī, for as Urvoy has observed, there is generally a positive correlation in the ‘Unwān between the amount of ink spilt by Ghubrīnī’s on the karāmāt of any one of his subjects and the perceived intellectual stature and socio-cultural importance of said subject.467

But the relatively great number of karāmāt attributed to Ḥarrālī may also be a reflection of the simple fact that Ghubrīnī was particularly well informed on Ḥarrālī in general. To be sure, several of Ḥarrālī’s students went on to become teachers of Ghubrīnī. It is these figures who apparently witnessed Ḥarrālī’s karāmāt firsthand then later related their testimony to Ghubrīnī. These figures include ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq Ibn Rabī’, Abū ‘Abd Allāh “al-Adīb”, and Abū ‘Abd Allāh

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467 Urvoy also notes that, these two positively correlated factors—prominence and number of hagiographical anecdotes—tend to correlate negatively with Ghubrīnī’s supply of concrete biographical information on the subject in question. In Ḥarrālī’s particular case, however, despite the high number of karāmāt accounts, I would observe that the biographical information supplied by the Ghubrīnī is relatively adequate. Apart from a woeful lack of dates, Ḥarrālī’s notice in the ‘Unwān is in fact by far the most informative one at our disposal. Urvoy, Structuration, p. 92.

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al-Salāwī.⁴⁶⁸ Part of what makes the ‘Unwān’s account of Ḥarrālī’s karāmāt authoritative is that Ghubrīnī is in a position to personally attest to the veracity and soundness of character of his informants, having been their longtime student. The ‘Unwān’s reliance on such methodological criteria—reminiscent of those used in the field of ḥadīth—is consistent with the wider Maghribī historiography of the phenomenon of sainthood.

As Cornell has pointed out, it is also significant that the enterprise of hagiographic writing in the Maghrib was spearheaded primarily by legists, which is to say figures who by communal consensus were entrusted as wardens of the boundaries of Islamic orthodoxy. In authoring enduring works in the rijāl and manāqib genres, sharī‘ah-minded Sufis such as Tādīlī (d. 628/1230-1), ‘Azafī (d. 633/1236), and Ibn Qunfudh (810/1406-7) effectively lent the weight of their authority as legists to the conceptual construction and institutionalization of sainthood in the Muslim West.⁴⁶⁹ As a jurisprudent and a one-time chief qāḍī of Bijāyah, Ghubrīnī too may be viewed as a tangential participant in this tradition by virtue of his at least partially hagiographical work, the ‘Unwān.

One consequence of the heavy involvement of Mālikī legists in the writing of Maghribī hagiographical literature was an insistence on the balance between knowledge (‘ilm) or metaphysical doctrine and praxis (‘amal) or outwardly observable and socially replicable acts of

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⁴⁶⁸ A student of Ḥarrālī who accompanied him during his final years in the Mashriq, Salāwī is discussed in more detail below. It should be mentioned that according to his notice in Ibn Rushayd’s Mil’, Salāwī was reportedly responsible for composing a short work dedicated to the recension of Ḥarrālī’s karāmāt. Ibn Rushayd claims to have seen this work and received an ijāzah in it from Salāwī (wa-huwa lanā minhu ijāzatan). Salāwī’s collection of Ḥarrālī’s karāmāt appears lost today. However, there are a handful of unique anecdotes preserved in the Mil’ that do not appear in the ‘Unwān. Ibn Rushayd, Mil’, vol. 2, pp. 307-8.

⁴⁶⁹ Cornell, Realm, pp. 63-7, 272-7. One might also add that Ghubrīnī’s informants themselves possess the same trustworthy aura since they too were recognized to varying degrees as legists.
piety. In this respect, Ghubrīnī’s task in writing about Ḥarrālī’s sainthood was not too hard, for Ḥarrālī combined in his identity a mystic but also a consummate religious scholar and a punctilious follower of the sunnah to boot.

Another factor that made Ghubrīnī’s task of making Ḥarrālī’s sainthood palatable are the nature of the latter’s miracles. For despite the emphasis on a balance between ‘amal and ‘ilm when it came to the constitution of saints, the Maghribī hagiographical tradition generally privileged ‘ilm over ‘amal when it came to the nature of the miracles themselves. Thus, the lesser regarded ‘amal-based miracles typically included such nature-subjugating feats as taming wild beasts, subduing jinn spirits, and healing the sick. As well, ‘amal-based miracles tended to defy the laws of physics, through levitation, rapidly travelling great distances, or being in two places at once. On the other hand, the more esteemed and more frequently cited ‘ilm-based miracles include the ability to read the thoughts of others (mukāshfat al-dhikr), uncovering hidden secrets (baṣīrah), and the ability to foretelling the future (firāsah). Because they involve the articulation of extraordinary knowledge, these feats may be regarded as “epistemological” miracles, and as the fruits of “cardiognostic acumen”.

Ḥarrālī was best known for his firāsah. One example of this, as mentioned in the last chapter, is Ḥarrālī’s foretelling of the personal and professional fortunes of several of his students. Other examples include an episode during which he forecast the coming of rains in

470 Cornell, Realm, p. 115, 275. Ohlander, Suhrawardi, pp. 115, 276

471 Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, pp. 151-2. Its worth noting that Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qurasḥī (the master of Ḥarrālī’s master al-Qurṭūbī) was also known for predicting the future spiritual and professional achievements of his disciples. See Qurashī’s notice in Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt, vol. 4, pp. 305-6, nr. 632.
Bijāyah after a long dry spell.\textsuperscript{472} On the day of his death, Ḥarrālī will also foretell the exact time of day when he would pass away. As well, he apparently named the place and the occasion of the death of another person.\textsuperscript{473}

But Ḥarrālī’s \textit{firāsah} consists of more than just the vaticinal ability to foresee future events. At the heart of these anecdotes is a very particular understanding of predetermination and divine agency, which partly echoes both Ash‘arī theological precepts and partly echoes certain Sufi doctrines as articulated by the likes of theoreticians such as Ibn ‘Arabī. Another idiosyncratic element inherent in Ḥarrālī’s \textit{karāmāt} accounts is his apparent radical compassion in regards to the weaknesses and depravities of the human soul, and the self-inflicted suffering it engenders.

Of the dozen-odd \textit{karāmāh} accounts related by Ghubrīnī in the ‘Unwān, I have selected two in order to illustrate the above points, the first of which is as follows:

\begin{quote}
Another \textit{karāmāh} of [Ḥarrālī’s] is that which I heard from more than one informant whom I trust (\textit{min ghayr wāḥ id min-man athiq bih}), which is that one day he was walking towards Bāb al-Baḥr [a Bijāyan landmark] with some intimate companions in tow, whereupon [they encountered] a person swaying from inebriation. [The drunk] then threw his hands on the shaykh and said to him: “\textit{yā sayyidī!} Grant me that by which I may round off this drunkenness (\textit{mā utimmu bi-hi hādhihi al-sakrah})”. At this, people rebuked him, but [Ḥarrālī] told them: “Be not troubled, let him be”. And so they did. Then [Ḥarrālī] removed his trousers (\textit{sirwāl}) and gave them to him, because he had nothing else [to give]. So the man departed with the pants in hand. [Ḥarrālī’s actions] were condemned by some of those who witnessed [the scene], and condoned by some of those who are of the inward (\textit{ahl

\textsuperscript{472} This \textit{karāmah} is arguably a ‘\textit{ilm}–\textit{amal} hybrid. For while Ḥarrālī is said to have predicted the coming of the rain in advance, witnesses also report that the rain started coming down at the precise moment when Ḥarrālī lifted his hands to the heavens in supplication. In any case, this \textit{karāmāh} echoes the \textit{Ṣalāt al-\textit{istisqā’} rite which is part of the Prophet’s \textit{sunna}. Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 149.

\textsuperscript{473} The figure in question is a certain ‘Uthmān Ibn Abī Khālid al-Ishbīlī. The precise identity of this figure remains unknown and his relationship to Ḥarrālī is unclear. We are told that ‘Uthmān retired to bed one night in a willfully unrepentant state after having committed some unspecified type of sin. The next day when he appeared before Ḥarrālī, he was told by the latter: “your passing the night in [a state of] contrariness will be expiated by your martyrdom at Sabtah”. This particular \textit{karāmāh} is related not by Ghubrīnī but by Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, who concludes by confirming: “the matter turned out just as [Ḥarrālī] had said, and [‘Uthmān] was martyred in Sabtah”. The Mediterranean port city of Sabtah was the site of a number of battles and sieges during the first half of the 13\textsuperscript{th} century. See Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, \textit{Sabk}, p. 91; Ferhat, \textit{Sabta}, pp. 205-13.
al-bāṭin). [Afterwards,] the jurist (al-faqīh) continued his way with his companions to the mosque, and after an hour the [drunk] man arrived rueful and repentant.\footnote{Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 150. A slightly different version of the account is related by Salāwī, one of Ḥarrālī’s students, in Ibn Rushayd, Mil’, vol. 2, pp. 306-7.}

In indulging the behavior of someone who was in unequivocal contravention of the sharī‘ah, Ḥarrālī’s actions flirt dangerously close to the boundaries of normative Sunnī ethics. Ghubrīnī seems to be aware of this, which may be why, after initially referring to Ḥarrālī as al-shaykh, he refers to him on a second occasion as al-faqīh, perhaps by way of reminding any skeptical readers of Ḥarrālī’s credentials as a religious scholar. Beyond this, however, Ghubrīnī does not offer any substantive commentary on this particular anecdote, stating only that Ḥarrālī’s actions were a question of “presence” (qaḍīyah haḍarīyah)—a rather vague explanation that doesn’t really get to the bottom of the matter.

A more informative explanation can be found in Salāwī’s version of the event, preserved in Ibn Rushayd’s Mil’ al-‘aybah, in which, sensing the discomfort in some of his companions, Ḥarrālī privately explained to them that, from the point of view of the divine command and prohibition (al-amr wa-al-nahy), the drunkard was indeed in a state of insubordination; however, from the point of view of predetermination and allotment (sābiq al-qāḍā’ wa-al-qadar), the drunkard was fully submitted to the divine will.\footnote{See Salāwī’s notice in Ibn Rushayd, Mil’, vol. 2, pp. 306-7.} Ḥarrālī’s actions thus appear to stem from an outsize emphasis on the divine will and on the pre-ordained determination of individual destinies. This perspective may be partly rooted in Ḥarrālī’s training in Ash’arī theology in Fez. Of course, it is an Ash’arī voluntarism that, in Ḥarrālī’s hands, has been heavily “spiritualized”, taken to its mystical extreme.
This perspective is also one which can be aligned with ideas expressed in his corpus. Indeed, Ḥarrālī’s writings can often be a useful source of commentary on aspects of his biography, in the sense that some of his doctrinal pronouncements seem to align with and bring into focus some of the more mysterious hagiographical anecdotes attributed to him. For example, one can shed additional light on the above anecdote by examining the following epigram of Ḥarrālī, in which he states that the question of which of God’s servants will heed the enjoining command (be it prescriptive or proscriptive) is synchronically linked to the act of creating the directive itself:

For every issue regarding which God has prescribed action (kull mā amara Allāh bi-al-taṣrīf fīh), He has [already] cleaved in its [very] existentiation (fa-qad qassama al-takwīn fīh) between performer and abstainer (bayna fā‘il wa-tārik).\(^{476}\)

In one respect, it is somewhat unusual, and certainly fortuitous from the point of view of academic study, that in Ḥarrālī are united the qualities of not only a saint to whom karāmāt were attributed, but also a writer and expositor of Sufi doctrine. At the same, Ḥarrālī’s autobiographical voice in his corpus is nearly non-existent, which means there are no instances of him reflecting and commenting on his own spiritual experiences. Even in an abstract sense, the concepts of sainthood and the various stations of the spiritual path are not of particular interest to Ḥarrālī, which is why it is often helpful to turn to the thought of Ibn ‘Arabī, a contemporary Sufi theoretician of a similar background to Ḥarrālī, only much more explicit than the latter on the subject of sainthood, the typologies of saints, and the preternatural cognitive powers that they access. In the following passage, Izutsu paraphrases Ibn ‘Arabī’s views on the ability of such enlightened souls to perceive the ontological predetermination at work in human affairs:

…everything, every event in the world is in accordance with what has been eternally determined in the form of an archetype or archetypes. The ‘knower’ [al-ʿārif] knows that this ontological

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\(^{476}\) Ḥarrālī, *Hikam* (Katurah ed.), p. 113, nr. 28.
determination can never be changed. In the eyes of a man who has penetrated into the depth of the structure of Being, everything follows the track fixed by the very nature of Being, and nothing can deviate from it. In the light of this knowledge, even a man disobedient to God is walking along the God-determined way. And it is not in the power of an Apostle to bring such a man back to the ‘right road’, because the man is already on the ‘right road’.477

Although Ibn ‘Arabī’s doctrine of the “immutable archetypes” (al-a’yān al-thābitah) is not expounded in Ḥarrālī’s writings in exactly the same terms nor to the same comprehensive extent, it certainly serves as helpful context when analyzing those biographical anecdotes of Ḥarrālī’s that feature his belief in the predetermined, unalterable course of human destinies. Ḥarrālī’s radical adherence to the concept of qadar is even more evident than in the second karāmāh account reproduced below. Oddly enough, this one too involves alcohol abuse:

Another karāmāh of [Ḥarrālī’s] is that related to me by my shaykh, the faqīh Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq [Ibn Rabī’] who said: A woman from among the acquaintances (min ma’ārif) of the shaykh had a son who used to drink and incur [harm] on himself (yajnī ‘alá nafsih). She used to complain to the shaykh and he used to tell her: “Tell him to drink from large cups, why is he drinking from small cups?” This would cause her internal disquiet and she would say: “I ask [the shaykh] to pray on my behalf [for God] to alleviate [my son’s] condition and instead he orders him to increase [his drinking].” [Ibn Rabī’] said: So we asked [the shaykh] about it and he said: “qadar has foreordained that he will drink a [pre-specified] amount of wine, and it is necessary that that which qadar has foreordained should come to pass. Thus, if he drinks [the pre-specified amount] with small cups the period will last long, and if he drinks it with large cups the period will shorten.” I [Ghubrīnī] say: the truth of this matter is that the shaykh had been given insight by God into [the son’s] affair and into the truth of his personal destiny. [Ibn Rabī’] said: Indeed, only a brief period of time passed before the young man repented and his condition improved [thanks] to the barakah of the shaykh.478

In this astonishing account in which Ḥarrālī is plainly encouraging the consumption of larger quantities of alcohol, the optics are even worse than in the first account. Unlocking the mystery of both karāmāh accounts, however, lies in the key concepts of pre-determination (qaḍā’) and allotment (qadar) which are part of the long-debated problem of predestination in Islam. The most helpful take on these terms, from the mystical perspective which Ḥarrālī is obviously taking here, is that proffered by Ibn ‘Arabī. Viewing them from his paradigm of archetypes, Ibn ‘Arabī

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477 Izutsu, Sufism, pp. 280-1.

478 Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, pp. 150-1.
defines qaḍā’, on the one hand, as God’s decisive judgment of a thing on the basis of its archetypal determination in the state of non-existence. On the other hand, qadar refers to the specification of when the judgement is concretely actualized in time.479

Applying these definitions to our analysis of Ḥarrālī’s karāmāt, we might say that the logic of these anecdotes revolves around Ḥarrālī’s cognitive grasp of the qaḍā’ and qadar of the individuals in question. Now, in both cases, since these individuals committed sin but ultimately repented, their qaḍā’ may be described as “mixed”, a heterogeneous combination of good and bad, light and darkness; as for their qadar, it has to do with pivotal turnabout moment of their lives, which is connected with their unique process of spiritual realization. The gist of both accounts lies in Ḥarrālī’s alleged ability to perceive the mixed nature of these individuals’ archetype (qaḍā’) and his intuition of the precise moment (qadar) when they would redeem themselves.480 It is in this sense that these accounts represent epistemological miracles, and are not cases of Ḥarrālī actively altering the course of destiny.

This is also partly what extenuates Ḥarrālī’s actions from a sharī‘ perspective. In the first anecdote, for example, Ḥarrālī’s compassionate posture towards the drunk is justified post facto in that the latter reportedly sobered up that very day and joined Ḥarrālī’s circle at the mosque. The idea here is that Ḥarrālī had intuited that the drunkard’s moment of redemption was nigh. In the second anecdote, the turnabout moment appears to have been delayed: the use of the tense kānat suggests that the woman may have lodged her complaint with the shaykh several times.

479 Izutsu, Sufism, pp. 175-6.

480 One of the more subtle observations we find in Izutsu’s presentation of Ibn ‘Arabī’s thought is that qaḍā’ is not necessarily “prior” or more “essential” than qadar. The latter in some respects determines the former. Presumably, the two karāmāh accounts of Ḥarrālī reproduced here—which feature a mixed qaḍā’ and a pivotal qadar moment—are a case in point. Izutsu, Sufism, pp. 177.
over a longer period and that it may have taken longer for her wayward son to amend his ways. Despite the delay, however, the important thing is that the moment of redemption did arrive in the end.\footnote{The previously mentioned account of Ḥarrālī predicting the death of ‘Uthmān al-Ishbīlī is another case in point. It’s not just that Ḥarrālī divinized the time and place of ‘Uthmān’s death, but rather another case of a “mixed” archetype (qadā’) whose critical turnabout point (qadar) Ḥarrālī was able to perceive. For ‘Uthmān, that critical, redemptive point happened to be his martyrdom at Sabtah.}

Knowledge of the mystery of qadar, according to Ibn ‘Arabī, is one of the loftiest stations of knowing and is only granted to a small number of individuals who possess a perfect mystical intuition.\footnote{Cited in Izutsu, \textit{Sufism}, pp. 177-8. See also Ibn ‘Arabī, \textit{Fuṣūṣ}, p. 132.} Based on the hagiographical literature of this time period, Ḥarrālī does seem to be in rare company. There are only a few notable contemporary Maghribī figures who are cited for this particular ability. Among the most famous are the illiterate saint Abū Ya‘zā (d. 572/1177) and Abū al-'Abbās al-Sabtī\footnote{Cornell, \textit{Realm}, pp. 79-92.} (d. 601/1204) of Marrakesh. In Ḥarrālī’s own immediate orbit, his mentors Dahmānī and Bājī, as detailed in their respective \textit{manāqib}, were also known for \textit{karāmāt} including some of the epistemological type. But the character of Ḥarrālī’s \textit{karāmāt}, with its accent on mercy towards apparently irredeemable souls, is still unique. As for Ibn ‘Arabī, he himself would probably claim to have transcended the level of \textit{karāmāt} altogether. However, his insights into the psychology of \textit{firāsah} are instructive for our purposes, especially in the following passage in which Izutsu once again ably distills Ibn ‘Arabī’s thoughts on the issue:

...\textit{qadar} is an extremely delicate state in which an archetype is about to actualize itself in the form of a concretely existent thing. To know \textit{qadar}, therefore, is to peep into the ineffable mystery of Being, for the whole secret of Being extending from God to the world is disclosed therein...If a man happens to obtain the true knowledge of \textit{qadar}, the knowledge surely brings him a perfect peace of mind and an intolerable pain at the same time. The unusual peace of mind arises from the consciousness that everything in the world occurs as it has been determined from eternity. And whatever may happen to himself or others, he will be perfectly content with it. Instead of struggling
in vain for obtaining what is not in his capacity, he will be happy with anything that is given him. He must be tormented, on the other hand, by an intense pain at the sight of all the so-called ‘injustices’, ‘evils’, and ‘sufferings’ that reign rampant around him, being keenly conscious that it is not in his ‘preparedness’ to remove them from the world.484

Explained in this way, it is clear that Ḥarrālī’s knowledge of qadar ties in with his previously discussed asceticism and world-renunciation, including the passive approach he may have adopted in his professional career. Whether Ḥarrālī already concretely knew his own qadar or if he simply believed in its ineluctability in a theoretical sense, his actions and his words show a man who is perfectly detached from worldly matters, enjoying perfect peace of mind. As for the “intense pain”, this too appears to be something which afflicted Ḥarrālī from early on. The young Ibn Abī al-Dunyā in Ṭarābulus remarked that Ḥarrālī would often be brought to tears by the intense pity he felt towards sinners. These lost souls, as Ḥarrālī saw them, were bringing suffering upon themselves from one perspective, but from another, were merely playing out their God-approved archetype. Since it is not within his power to change that, the only appropriate response Ḥarrālī could conjure was merciful compassion.

Another point to note is that Ḥarrālī’s all-embracing compassion woven into his firāsah accounts is not shared with other figures ascribed the same preternatural talent. In general, this compassion does seem to be somewhat alien to the austere and ethically rigorous Mālikī environment of the 13th century Maghrib, where even in Sufi circles there was a puritanical emphasis on “enjoining the good and forbidding evil”. One might even say that the impression of Ḥarrālī as it comes through in some of his karāmāt accounts is broadly speaking more

484 Izutsu, Sufism, pp. 177-8.
reminiscent of the radical love of Christ, or even further afield, the compassion for suffering of a Buddha figure.485

It is important to point out that, despite Ḥarrālī’s capacity for mercy, there is plenty of evidence that he upheld the authority of the sharī‘ah. There is even an anecdote in which Ḥarrālī directly chastises one of his students for consuming alcohol, taking a strictly moral approach with no reference to qadā’ or qadar. One of Ḥarrālī’s students apparently spent a night drinking and had fallen and cut his face on the glass bottle. When he presented himself to the shaykh the next morning, Ḥarrālī tells him:

Shed not the blood of the bottle henceforth (lā tasfikna dam al-zujājati ba’dahā) for wounds as they fester tell a story (innā al-jurūḥ kamā ‘ammilat qaṣṣās)486

One also finds in Ḥarrālī’s corpus passages in which he sternly denounces the evils of alcohol, while explaining the wisdom of its prohibition in Islam.487 From an eschatological point of view, Ḥarrālī also fundamentally maintains the reality of hell and punishment for sins. As is clear from the following passage where he makes clear that at one level in the divine there is unity in which there is no opposition, but on the level of God’s relationship with the world, there is a multiplicity of divine names that need to be fulfilled and manifested:

To God belongs the totality of the creation and the command (lil-lāh kulīyat al-khalq wa-al-amr) [in terms of both] guidance and misguidance (hudan wa-iḍlālan) in such a way as to make manifest His

485 Perhaps the closest parallel to Ḥarrālī in the Maghribī environment is Abū Madyan whose hagiographic appellation “the succor” (al-gawth) hints at certain feminine or maternal qualities. In his Bidāyat al-murīd, Abū Madyan compares the saint to the earth, an all-forgiving, maternal entity “which bears everything that is repugnant”. However, this aspect of Abū Madyan’s hagiographic profile does not manifest in his karāmāt accounts in the same manner and to the same degree as it does in Ḥarrālī’s. On this particular aspect of Abū Madyan’s hagiographic profile see Cornell, Realm, pp. 283-4.

486 Although the story of this line is associated with Ḥarrālī in Ibn al-Qāḍī and Bābā, the contemporary historian al-Marrakushī attributes the line to Ibn Abbār, who uttered it in a different context. Ibn al-Qāḍī, Jadhwat, p. 282 (in the notice of Ibn ‘Arabi). Bābā, Nayl, p. 320. Marrākushī, I’lām, p. 108.

487 See for example Ḥarrālī, Miftāḥ (Kh. 1997), pp. 75, 94-5.
Word—[a Word] that is totalizing (iḥāran li-kalimatih al-jāmiʿah), that encompasses the opposing pairs (al-shāmilah li-mutaqābilāt al-azwāj), and whose denouement (muntahāhā) is a division into two abodes: an abode of merciful light, [corresponding to] His Name al-ʿAzīz al-Raḥīm, and an abode of vengeful fire, [corresponding to] His Name al-Jabbār al-Muntaqīm. And on the Day when the Hour is come, that Day they will be separated [30:14].

From one point of view, the issue of qadāʾ and qadar dovetails with the question of theodicy. One of the ways Ibn ʿArabī explains the issue is that there are two aspects of God’s will: the existentiating command (al-amr al-takwīnī), which brings into existence the immutable identities and which cannot but be executed, and the enjoining command (al-amr al-taklīfī) which pertains to the created order and is expressed within a religious framework of commands and prohibitions—which can, for their part, be disobeyed. Commenting on Ibn ʿArabī’s thought as expressed in the Fuṣūṣ, Dagli writes:

These two dimensions of the divine will do not eliminate the reality of reward and punishment, because disobedience is still disobedience from the perspective of the creature in relation to his Creator. The perspective that all things occur through the divine will can only be that of God in Himself. To say that all things are the will of God is in essence to say that all is good and there is no evil. Just as there is good and evil in the world while there is only good from the point of view of God Himself, so too is there obedience and disobedience in the world but only obedience from the point of view of God.

Though such subtle doctrinal nuances may have been appreciated by an elite few, Ḥarrālī’s actions were always liable to be misinterpreted by some segment of his society at large. At some level, it would have been easy to assume that Harāllī’s passive forebearance in the face of offense directed at himself, on the one hand, and the pity he felt towards violators of the sharīʿah, on the other hand, both stem from a place of weakness. That is, if Harāllī was so forebearant in regards to his own rights, so the thinking might go, then perhaps he was equally lukewarm about upholding the rights of God and applying religious law. In reality, it should be

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488 Ḥarrālī, *Tafsīr* (Kh. 1997), p. 245. This passage appears in the context of a commentary on the power of magic (*sihr*) and its potential to lead people astray.

489 Ibn ʿArabī, *Ringstones* (Dagli trans.), p. 83
recognized that Ḥarālī’s famous ability to forebear insult and injury to his own person is a form of detachment and one of the fruits of intense spiritual training which can lead to the annihilation of the ego. As for Ḥarrālī’s merciful compassion—it is not in itself a direct result of spiritual training. Rather it is related to the particular epistemological gift of firāsah, and is the result of a very particular and idiosyncratic adaptation or manifestation of such an ability by Ḥarrālī.

We have seen how already at an earlier stage of his career Ḥarrālī had been censured by his young, Ṭarābulus-based pupil Ibn Abī al-Dunyā. In the first karāmāh account, even the conciliatory-minded Ghubrīnī admits that there were witnesses who disapproved of Ḥarrālī’s indulgence of the staggering drunk. Ghubrīnī also informs us that Ḥarrālī was often the target of point-blank imprecations on the part of members of the general public (kāna mubtalī bi-iṭlāq al-nās ‘alayh). At some point, there were apparently rumors in some Bijāyan circles to the effect that Ḥarrālī was a heretic. Ghubrīnī mentions an attempt on Ḥarrālī’s life by a commoner who had apparently heard the rumors and was roused to take decisive action. In a professional context, it is not too hard to imagine rival scholars exploiting Ḥarrālī’s scandalous behavior or disseminating harmful rumors. Ghubrīnī does not provide definitive indications of this but we know that he typically avoids mentioning this type of friction in the ‘Unwān.

What’s also interesting is that, in the later biographical tradition, the main lines of polemical attack against Ḥarrālī by historians like Dhaḥābī is his firāsah—not the divining of personal destinies of individuals, but a more abstract, and in Dhaḥābī’s view, the more pretentious and

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490 “There came to [Ḥarrālī] a man with the blade of a knife (nīslat sikkīn) in his hands. He said to him: I came to kill you. [Ḥarrālī] treated him with benevolence (lāṭafah) and said to him: sit down and appease yourself (iṣṭarḍa ‘alā nafsik). So he sat. For what reason would you kill me? He said: I have been told that you are an unbeliever (kāfir). He said: If your informant is lying then it is not licit for you to kill me; if he is truthful, then I profess that there is no god but God and that Muḥammad is the messenger of God. Whereupon the man renewed his faith at the hands of the shaykh and repented and became one of his students (talāmidhatih).” Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 147.
sinister prophesizing derived from the science of letters (‘ilm al-ḥurūf). Dhahabī and the later biographers who take their cue from him specifically allege that Ḥarrālī claimed to have determined the precise timing of when the dajjāl would appear and when the sun would rise from the west. Having read all of Ḥarrālī’s extant corpus—which appears to include everything he wrote on the subject of lettrism—I have not come across evidence that corroborates exactly the allegations made against him. One rather metaphorical pronouncement by Ḥarrālī on the dajjāl is his aphorism: “Whosoever promotes [the life of] the world (aṣlaha al-dunyā) and subverts religion (afsada al-dīn) is a dajjāl”.491 To my knowledge, only on one occasion does Ḥarrālī explicitly put forward a “global” historical prophecy, which is that in the year 650 (1252-3) Muslims will retake the city of Jerusalem.492 At any rate, for our purposes here it will suffice to note that Ḥarrālī’s firāsah, in its different forms, was a source of some controversy both during his lifetime and posthumously in the later biographical tradition.

The Tarragona Letter

Before leaving behind the subject of Bijāyah, there is one final important addendum that needs to be inserted, namely, an explanation of the dramatic circumstances surrounding Ḥarrālī’s exit from the city. Ḥarrālī’s final journey to the Mashriq is precipitated by the Tarragona letter

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491 Ḥarrālī, Ḥikam, p. 120, nr. 127.

492 Ḥarrālī writes of a providential “taking of turns” (tanāwub) regarding ownership of Jerusalem by the People of Book. On the basis of ḥurūf and numerological considerations not fully clear to me, Ḥarrālī states that the city will revert to Muslim rule approximately in the year 650 (= 1252-3). Ḥarrālī’s prediction accords only vaguely with how historical events unfolded. Since 626/1229, Jerusalem had been ceded by the Ayyūbid ruler al-Ḵāmil to Frederick II of Sicily as part of the terms of the Treaty of Jaffā. In 637/1239, Jerusalem was attacked by the Ayyūbid prince al-Ḵāṣir Dāwūd. The Crusaders briefly re-acquired the city in 641/1243-4 before the Ayyūbid siege of 642/1244 culminated in the brutal sacking of Jerusalem by a large contingent of Khwarazmian Turks. Ayyūbids regained full control of Jerusalem in 1246 and, as is well known, the city remained in Muslim hands for several centuries thereafter. Ḥarrālī, Lamḥah, fols. 102a-102b. Taheri, E. Islamica, “The Crusades”. Hillenbrand, Ayyūbid Jerusalem, pp. 10-18.
affair. At some point during his sojourn in Bijāyah, or possibly prior to it, Ḥarrālī learned that members of his extended family (aqārib) were being held prisoners in Spain. In an attempt to bring about their release, Ḥarrālī composed a letter addressed directly to their captor: Father Ferrer, archbishop of the Catalan port city Tarragona, which was at that time part of the growing realm of James I’s Aragon. But Ḥarrālī lacked the financial means typically required to ransom captives during this period, so in his letter, he could do little more than appeal to the beau ideal of Abrahamic fraternity that links Christians and Muslims. Articulating ecumenical sentiments rarely seen in this time period, the letter intersects a fascinating array of contexts, including Christian-Muslim politics in the Mediterranean, the history of medieval captives, and the construction of the intercessional power of saints in the hagiographical literature.

Ḥarrālī’s letter amounting to roughly 40 lines and survives today because it was reproduced by Ibn Ṭawwāḥ in his Sabk al-maqāl.⁴⁹³ Van Koningsveld briefly refers to the letter as part of a study on the history of Muslim captives in Europe in the Middle Ages.⁴⁹⁴ The letter is discussed at greater length by Khayyāṭī, Ḥarrālī’s Arabic editor, although some of his speculations are not based on research beyond the text of the Sabk.⁴⁹⁵ The main difficulty with Ḥarrālī’s letter is historically contextualizing it. The body of the epistle itself is lacking in contextualizing elements, for example, direct references to historical events or geographical landmarks. Ibn Ṭawwāḥ

⁴⁹³ See Ḥarrālī’s notice in Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, Sabk al-maqāl. pp. 85-7. To my knowledge, Ibn Ṭawwāḥ is the only primary source that mentions the Tarragona letter. The reproduced letter occupies roughly half of Ḥarrālī’s notice in the Sabk. Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s notices on other great figures such as Abū Madyan, Mahdawī, Shādhilī, Ibn ‘Arabī, and Shushtarī also feature long anecdotes, numerous lines of poetry, and in the case of Shādhilī a reproduction of a letter addressed to disciples (Sabk, pp. 80-2).

⁴⁹⁴ Van Koningsveld, Muslim Slaves, whose source was a Madrid MS. of Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s Sabk al-maqāl.

⁴⁹⁵ Kh. 2011, pp. 101-4.
Ṭawwāḥ’s commentary on the letter provides some useful information but is telegraphically brief and potentially even misleading.

One problem, for example, is that neither Ḥarrālī nor Ibn Ṭawwāḥ refer to the exact circumstances of the capture of Ḥarrālī’s relatives, even though some of the victims are identified by name.496 Historians tell us that Muslim slaves living in Christian Spain became an increasingly common phenomenon from the 11th century onward, with some being captured by Christian pirates. But a more quantitatively significant source of Muslim captivity was the accelerating rate of Christian conquests of the cities and provinces of Muslim Spain in the 13th century.497 My research has led me to the conclusion that the individuals on whose behalf the epistle was composed were in fact residents of the island of Majorca (Mayūrqah) who, along with likely many other Mayorcan Muslims, fell into some form of bondage and indentured servitude as a direct result of the conquest of the island by James I of Aragon (r. 1213-1276).498

The timing of this significant geopolitical event in early 627/1230 also coincides suggestively with a number of details in Ḥarrālī’s own biography. One of the most telling clues is the mission—mentioned in an earlier chapter—of Ḥarrālī’s student Abū ‘Alī al-Andalūsī in late 627/1230 to the ruler of Irbil, Mużaffar al-Dīn al-Kūkbūrī. Abū ‘Alī, we are told, was

496 In his letter Ḥarrālī refers to “al-Ḥasan, and his paternal uncle, and his two brothers Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm, and their mother Ẓabīyah, and their companion (rafiqihim) Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Tilimsānī.” Unfortunately, this information proved to be a dead end.


498 A large military force and about 150 ships set sail from the ports of Tarragona, Salou, and Cambrils on 5 September 1229, and landed on the bay of Palma on the night of 8-9 September. On the 31st of December, the city of Palma was assaulted and captured, with considerable loss of life. The subjugation of the rest of the island was carried out by Palm Sunday, 1230. The island of Minorca was submitted to tribute-paying status in 1231, though not physically occupied until 1286. The islands of Ibiza and Formentera were occupied in 1235. O’Callaghan, *Medieval Spain*, pp. 340-3. Smith, et al, *Book of Deeds*, p. 3. Ibn Abū Zar’, *Dhakhīrah*, p. 55.
specifically tasked with requesting monetary aid for the ransoming Muslims taken captive during
the fall of Mayūrqah. Elsewhere in that same earlier chapter, I referred also to a
hagiographical anecdote describing how Abū Saʻīd al-Bājī—one of Ḥarrālī’s spiritual masters—
was involved in the ransoming of a group of Muslim women who had been captured during the
fall of Mayūrqah and were being held at Christian hostels near Tunis. The anecdote, as it turns
out, is related by none other than Ḥarrālī, who witnessed first-hand Bājī’s generous actions that
day. Although his own captured relatives do not appear to be implicated in this particular
episode, Ḥarrālī may have already been aware of their situation at the time. It may even be the
case that Ḥarrālī’s decision to return to the Maghrib and settle in Bijāyah was made partly with a
view towards arranging their freedom.

In the Jubrān edition of the Sabk, Ḥarrālī transcribes his addressee’s name as (فرّیر أﺻب ﺑدره). This figure is recognized by Ḥarrālī as “the priest of Tarragona (qissīs tarkūnah), its military
leader (raʾīsuhā), its [chief] administrative and religious figure (ṣāḥib ḥukmihā wa-akhāmihā).”

After an examination of some important primary Christian sources, I have identified two figures
whose official functions roughly match that described in Ḥarrālī’s letter. In addition, the Latin
names of both figures bear some resemblance to the (mis)transcription found in Ḥarrālī’s letter.

499 Although Tārīkh Irbil makes reference to Ḥarrālī being Abū ‘Alī’s shaykh, it does not specifically
317; and vol. 2, pp. 687-90.

500 Hawwārī, Manāqib, pp. 105-6. The fact that the anecdote describes events that transpired shortly after
the fall of Mayūrqah 627/1230, suggests that Ḥarrālī visited Abū Saʻīd al-Bājī in Tūnis at least twice: the
first time circa 1220 when he had just arrived from the Far Maghrib (in the anecdote of his first meeting
with al-Bājī, Ḥarrālī is quoted as saying: kāna dhālika ʻinda wurūdī min al-Maghrib); the second time,
would have been between 1230 (the fall of Majorca) and 628/1231 (the death of Bājī), appears to have
been upon Ḥarrālī’s return from the Mashriq, and just prior to his settling in Bijāyah.
The first candidate is Aspàreg de la Barca\textsuperscript{501} who, from 1215 until his death in 1233, was the archbishop of Tarragona. However, several factors, including his early date of death, suggest that he was not the one who receives, and reacts to, Ḥarrālī’s letter.

The second figure is Ferrer de Pallarés\textsuperscript{502} (d. 1243) who was the *prepositus* (prior, prelate, provost, dean) at Tarragona from 1217 until probably 1233, when he likely assumed the office of archbishop upon the death of Aspàreg de la Barca. Prior to that, Ferrer would have been Asparég’s subaltern, but the office of *prepositus* which he held was still a powerful one.\textsuperscript{503} As it turns out, Ferrer was also intimately involved in the military campaign of James I in the Balearics. In December of 1228, during an audience with James I and other Catalan nobles in Barcelona, Ferrer pledged to contribute an armed galley and a handful of knights to the coming invasion of Majorca. Ferrer then participated personally in the brief siege of the city of Palma, and even offered James I tactical military advice during the battle.\textsuperscript{504}

Subsequently, Ferrer received a significant portion of the war spoils, including a number of estates and slaves. This fact is documented in the *Repartiment de Mallorca*, a text written in

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\textsuperscript{501} Previously the bishop of Pamplona (1212-15), Aspàreg (var. Spargo) de la Barca was a blood relation to James I. During the *Cort* at Leida in 1214, Aspàreg de la Barca reportedly lifted up the young king so that he could be seen by the nobles and receive their allegiance. As archbishop (or metropolitan) of Tarragona, Aspàreg de la Barca would have been in effect the spiritual head of a quite large ecclesiastical district which encompassed several regional dioceses including Huesca, Zaragoza, Barcelona, Girona, and Pamplona. This office was one of the key elements early on in James I’s efforts to politically consolidate his realm. Smith, *Book of Deeds*, p. 72, 17f. Smith, *Book of Deeds*, pp. 26, 56f, 75-6. Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, p. 38, 389, 6f.

\textsuperscript{502} Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, index p. 545 “Pallarés” and additional biographical references pp. 380-1, 39f.

\textsuperscript{503} The privileges of the *prepositus* would have included “choice revenues, custody of the common rents and temporalities, and the decisive vote in a deadlocked election for the metropolitanate.” Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, p. 381, 42f.

\textsuperscript{504} Smith et. al. *Book of Deeds*, pp. 77, 40f, 97, 111, 146f.
1232 recording the name, location, and extent of the lands on the island of Majorca allotted to the various expedition chiefs. Ferrer gained so much, in fact, that his residence on the island was later attacked out of envy by other Christian groups who had taken part in the fighting. In addition to his gains on the island of Majorca proper, Ferrer personally commanded the small Aragonese force that in 1235 occupied the two lesser islands of Ibiza and Formentera; James I would later cede both islands to Ferrer as fiefs.

The figure of Asparèg de la Barca on the other hand, does not appear to have participated personally in the fighting in Majorca, even if it is likely that he provided moral and material support to the campaign. More importantly, his name is mentioned far less than Ferrer’s in the Repartiment de Mallorca, which suggests that he received a far smaller share of the Majorcan war spoils. For these reasons, I believe it is Ferrer de Pallarés and not Asparèg de la Barca who was the actual steward of Ḥarrālī’s enslaved relatives. As for the Arabic transcription (فزير أصب بدره), one possible explanation for why it has come down to us in this form is that Ḥarrālī received inaccurate information prior to composing the letter. The death of Asparèg de la Barca in 1233—right around the time Ḥarrālī may have composed his letter—could have caused some uncertainty about the state of the Tarragona’s ecclesial hierarchy, leading Ḥarrālī to conflate the two figures of Asparèg de la Barca and Ferrer de Palléres. Aside from the possibility of Ḥarrālī being misinformed from the outset, there also is a very real possibility of a subsequent

505 See Repartiment, “Preborde de Tarragona” in index p. 295. It is worth mentioning that, among the hundreds of Arabic toponyms transcribed in the Repartiment de Mallorca, there is are two mentions (pp. 166, 272) of an “alqueria del Harrala” located in the island’s northeastern region of Yarta (Artà). However, even assuming that the transcriptions from Arabic in the Repartiment are accurate—and in many cases they are clearly not—the estate of “Harrala” does not appear to have been awarded to Ferrer. Unfortunately, the toponym “alqueria del Harrala” is not among those analyzed by Poveda Sánchez in his piece “Toponimia Arabe Musulmana De Maýurqa”.

506 O’Callaghan, Medieval Spain, p. 343.
metrical error on the part Ibn Ṭawwāḥ (or later copyists of the Sabk) who likely had little, if any, phonetic familiarity with Latinized Catalan names.

Turning to the content of the letter itself, Ḥarrālī plainly states in the second half of his epistle that he does not possess the material leverage by which to ransom his relatives’ freedom. That is why, in the first half, he couches his appeal to the priest in a rarified, humanitarian discourse that stresses the common ontological origin of all of humanity, the physical similarities between human beings, and their ultimate spiritual destiny:

In the Name of God... Who created all mankind from a single breath (min nafsin wāhidah), and Who forged all their bodies from the surface of the one Earth (barraka abdānahum kullahā min adīm al-arḍ al-wāhidah), thus making them, in truth, [the progeny] of a single womb (fa-ja’alam bi-al-ḥaqiqah dhawī rahim wāhidah). Were they to truly know each other, in view of what their bodies have in common (bi-mā ishtarakat fīhi abdānuhum), and how their souls come together in the one soul (infaradat bi-al-nafs al-wāhidah nufūsuhum), and how their spirits are actualized by God’s spirit (tahaqqaqat bi-rūḥ Allāh arwāḥuhum)—they would neither sever relations, nor spill each other’s blood, nor pounce on each other in the manner of lions pouncing on ewe (wa-lā tawāthabū tawāthub al-asad ‘alā al-ni’āj). Thus did God avenge for some against others, and made some taste the venom of others, each according to what he has done (kasabat yadāh) and according to what has been loaned to him and to his forebears in the way of his iniquity and his aggression (mā sullifa la-hu wa-li-salafihi min zulmihi wa-i’tidā’ih).

Ḥarrālī’s idealism is obviously tempered by a clear-sighted recognition of the grim reality of strife and mutually inflicted suffering that has beset humanity throughout its history. Part of the reason why Ḥarrālī can accept this situation so serenely appears to be a voluntarism of Sufi-Ashʿarī inspiration which allows him to accept that the whole drama of history is encompassed in the larger divine economy. It’s also worth noting that Ḥarrālī’s appraisal of the tragedy of human conflict is markedly non-partisan in tone. In a sense, this universalism follows partly from the Ashʿarī voluntarism itself, for if man ultimately is not the real author of his actions and everything is in the hands of God, then one cannot lay the blame for the violence at the doorstep of any one human faction. Ashʿarī voluntarism also forces one to admit that God’s acts in ways that transcend religious and cultural divisions, not always favoring one civilization over the other. In other words, despite the success of the Arab invasions centuries earlier, it is God’s will
that at this point in history the Christians have the political and military power to dominate over Muslims in Spain.

Ḥarrālī can still lament, however, how far reality falls short of the ideal. Specifically, he goes on to rue the enmity that exists between, on the one hand, the tribes descending from Jacob (Yaʿqūb) son of Isaac (Išḥāq)—including what he refers to as “the Yellow” (al-Asfār) father of all the “Romans” (al-Rūmīyah)—and on the other hand, the tribes descending from Ishmael (Ismāʿīl), father of all the Arabs. In principle united all under the patriarchy of Abraham, their common blood and common creed has tragically only resulted in more estrangement and enmity. Nevertheless, the epistle then goes on to suggest, albeit in impersonal terms, that there have been fruitful contacts among elite representatives of the Abrahamic faiths.

Unless, indeed (allāhumma ʿillā), [the case of] unique individuals from among the erudite (āḥādan min afrād al-fudalāʾ) and the greatest sages (akābir al-ḥukamāʾ) who have consummated true kinship [between] religious communities (qaḍū ḥaqq al-raḥim wa-al-millah), who have realized God’s spirit and became aligned (taḥaqqaqū bi-rūḥ Allāh fa-taṣāffū), who have consorted with each other in nearness and over distance (wa-tawāṣalū fī al-qurb wa-al-biʿād), and who have been freed from the abomination of mutual hatred and obstinacy (wa-khullīṣū min nukr al-tabāghūd wa-al-ʿinād) such that they were not burned by the fire of separation, and [this fire] become for them cool and innocuous, just as the [physical] burning fire had become so for their forefather Abraham; this is the result of their having returned with their hearts to the origin (ʿādū bi-qulūbhim ilā al-aṣl), and their having paid no heed to the accident of [cosmic] dispersion (lam yaltafītū ilā ʿāriḍ al-shītāt), and their having remained on the best of terms (baqū ʿalā ittiṣāl al-afḍal).507

Ḥarrālī goes on to urge the priest of Tarragona to respond in the “tradition of mutually loving sages” (ʿalā sunnat al-mutahābbīn al-ʿālimīn) and in a manner honoring the spirit of forgiveness as enshrined in the Gospel (al-Injīl) which “only a precious few have upheld” (lam yuḥāfīẓ ʿalayhā illā al-qalīl). To my eyes, the general tenor of Ḥarrālī’s epistle suggests that Ḥarrālī had experienced firsthand some positive and constructive encounter with the religious other.

507 Ḥarrālī’s letter is reproduced in Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, Sabk al-maqāl, pp. 85-7.
This fascinating passage recalls the possible meeting between Cairene mystic al-Fakhr al-Fārisī and St. Francis of Assisi in the midst of the Crusaders’ siege of Damietta. This passage suggests that if Ḥarrālī had not personally engaged in this or some form of inter-religious dialogue, then at the very least he had been made aware of their occurrence. It is also clear that, philosophically, Ḥarrālī was open to the idea that certain differences in religious culture are in some ways accidental and conceal a kind of essential unity at the ontological level. At the same time, I would counsel caution against Van Koningsveld’s oversimplified conclusion that the passage constitutes proof that Ḥarrālī was, like his contemporary Ibn ‘Arabī, a proponent of wahdat al-wujūd. I would reject even more forcefully the notion that Ḥarrālī is denying the “real meaning” of “religious demarcation lines”.508 For Ḥarrālī, the exoteric boundaries of religions were surely real. If anything, it would only be at the highest ontological level that they begin to merge. To penetrate into this esoteric perspective one has to be an advanced mystic, and Ḥarrālī plainly identifies himself as such to the Catalan priest:

Verily, the writer of this letter is among those for whom God has revealed (kashīfa) an essential aspect of His outer creation (kunihin min khalqihi al-ẓāhir) and an essential aspect of His inward fiat (amrihi al-bāṭin), one to whom God has shown (arāh) the first [principles] in their state of unity (al-awā’il min ḥaythu ijtama’at), and has been made to perceive (baṣṣarah) the disunited [elements] from the point of their disunity (al-muftariqāt min ḥaythu iftaraqat), and from whose vision (naẓar) [God] has expelled the manifold [forms of] differentiation (shattāt al-tafāwut).

Ḥarrālī’s proclamation of his own status here is not, in my view, a vain boast but rather is an attempt to impress upon his addressee that the epistle, with its high-minded appeals to inter-religious harmony, is written from a position of real spiritual and intellectual authority, that it is

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508 “[Ḥarrālī] appealed to his Spanish Christian colleagues to see further than the existing religious demarcation lines of which he denied the real religious meaning…In his letter, al-Harrālī implicitly looked at the matter from the mystic viewpoint of the ‘unity of existence’ (wahdat al-wujūd). This view taught, among other things, that the historic religions were nothing but manifestations of a kernel, which was in essence the same for all people. In this, he followed, for instance, his contemporary, the Andalusian mystic Muḥī al-Dīn ibn ‘Arabī, from Murcia.” Van Koningsveld, Muslim Slaves, p. 9.
not opportunistic sophistry. Ḥarrālī I believe was genuinely hoping to find in Ferrer an ecumenically inclined partner, and he may have believed that his best chance would be to openly signaling to his counterpart that he is of an esoteric mindset.

On the other hand, Ḥarrālī’s tone is not always adulatory and, intentionally or not, he misses several opportunities in his letter to be diplomatic. Although always maintaining a level of courteousness, the letter is surprisingly direct and free of gratuitous adulation towards the priest, especially considering the weak bargaining position Ḥarrālī finds himself in. For instance, Ḥarrālī does not conceal his deeply held belief in the exceptionalism of Islam as the final and most plenary of divine revelations. “How strange it is (‘ajaban), Ḥarrālī candidly confides to the priest, “that God has landed the family of one possessed of a totalizing wisdom (dhawī ḥimah kullīyah) in the hands of one possessed of a “gospelic” wisdom (ḥikmah injīliyah)”. As a Muslim mystic, Ḥarrālī clearly sees himself as heir to a wisdom tradition that is more comprehensive than that of his Christian counterpart. This totalizing, Islam-centric perspective is expressed regularly throughout Ḥarrālī’s corpus, even as it still makes room for the legitimacy of other religious traditions. But one would presume it would be best minimized in a letter to an archbishop. Besides showcasing Ḥarrālī’s arguably counterproductive level of transparency, the above cited phrase also represents a direct, lose-at-hand contradiction of Van Koningsveld’s assumption that Ḥarrālī did not consider the formal differences between religions meaningful.

Near the end of the letter, Ḥarrālī formally articulates his petition:

The priest of Tarragona…Ferrer…may God grant him success and guide him…has been addressed with this letter so that he may consider that which God shows him (li-yarā mā yurīhi-lāh) in the way of setting [the captives] free. For certain congenial friends (ba’d al-muḥibbin) have been prepared to allow (intadaba ilā) [captives] to earn their freedom through work (al-muqāṭa’ah ‘alayhim), which is lighter [a burden] than the one which we have learned the reader of this letter [has imposed].

Of the numerous meanings associated with the root [q t ‘], in this context it is likely being employed in the sense of a contractual agreement which stipulates that, upon the completion of a
particular project or task, the employer agrees to pay the employee a pre-determined sum, irrespective of the number of labor hours required to complete the task. Muslim slaves in medieval Christendom often did have the opportunity to earn their freedom, or at least to upgrade their status, through various forms of labor or service, including the skillful practice of a trade.

After reproducing Ḥarrālī’s letter to the priest, Ibn Ṭawwāḥ reprises his biography of Ḥarrālī by describing an astonishing sequence of events:

When the letter reached the priest of the aforementioned [city of] Tarragona, [the priest] became perplexed with the letter (tahayyar fī al-katb), admonished [its author] in the harshest of terms, and said: “This falls outside of the principles of religious laws (ḥādhā khārij ‘an aḥkām al-sharā’ī’).” He then referred the matter to the August, venerable, and late amīr Abū Zakariyā ibn Ḥafs—may God make cool their tomb, and settle their spirit in Paradise everlasting—whereupon [Abū Zakaṭiyā?] wrote to his son Abū Yahyā in Bijaṭāh: “give [Ḥarrālī] the choice between the Mashriq and the Maghrib; if he chooses the Maghrib over the Mashriq, then kill him ( iqḍi ‘alayh), and if he chooses the Mashriq, then let him go on his way ( khalli sabīlah).” And so he gave him the choice and he chose the Mashriq. And [in so doing] his star rose [ faṭala biḥadran mushriqan]. And afterwards the priest set his relatives free, and [the fulfillment of] his demands was made easy by virtue of his accession to God (suhhila bi-barakatihi ‘inda Allāh maṭālibah).”

While there is no obvious reason to doubt any part of Ḥarrālī’s letter, which is in character with the rest of his corpus, Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s postscript contains several dubious, or at least seriously under-contextualized, statements. Starting with the priest’s reaction, it is not too surprising that Ḥarrālī did not initially find in Padre Ferrer a receptive and magnanimous partner. In one sense, the Tarragona letter is another illustration of Ḥarrālī’s idealistic or naïve disregard of political and “human” realities. This was after all a time of war fought in a crusading spirit.

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509 The full expression would be: qāṭa ‘ahu ‘alā kadhā min al-ajr wa-al-‘amal.

510 In some cases, land and equipment would be loaned to the slave as in an initial subsidy. The Balearics in particular became a major slavery hub very soon after the Aragonese conquest: the geographical circumstances of the islands meant that the danger of escape was low and surveillance costs could be kept at a minimum. At the same time, the community of Muslims living under Aragon rule in the Balearics appears to have included a number of relatively free artisans and small traders. Van Koningsveld, Muslim Slaves, p. 8. Lourie, Free Moslems in the Balearics, pp. 629, 649.

511 Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, Sabk, p. 87.
and the hardening of anti-Muslim sentiment. Although, it could be argued that Aragon’s campaign was in some measure initiated with a view towards Mediterranean expansion and enhancing trading prospects by eliminating what had long been a major base of Muslim piracy. But there can be no doubt that the effort was galvanized from the start by a crusading zeal, as evinced by the involvement of Pope Gregory IX who had given his blessing to the venture and offered crusade indulgences to participants. As a high-ranking member of the church and someone who was personally invested in the campaign, Ferrer himself embodies the religious-military alliance driving the venture. Thus, the archbishop’s recalcitrant refusal to part with his booty in the form of slaves, to acquiesce to the demands of a defeated and powerless “heathen” enemy, is perfectly in keeping with the spirit of the times.

It would seem improbable, on the other hand, that the exact words uttered by Ferrer would have been reported without distortion to Bijāyah or Tūnis. Conceivably, the archbishop’s indignation could have been conveyed through the written word. Note, however, that the words put in Ferrer’s mouth appear to imply that both the Christian and the Muslim faiths are basically legitimate, even as he rejects the possibility that there could be any meaningful dialogue or accommodation between the two religious communities. It would not be insensible to assume that, in Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s account, the archbishop’s remark is probably either fictitious or at least is a misrepresentation reflecting Muslim, and especially Sufi, expectations of how a Christian priest might react to Ḥarrālī’s quixotic propositions. From a diplomatic standpoint, one might also add

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512 It’s also worth mentioning that in the Book of Deeds, James I writes the following on the subject of his expedition to Majorca: “And we set out on this voyage in the faith of God and for those who do not believe in Him, going against them for two reasons: to convert them or to destroy them, and to return that kingdom to the Faith of Our Lord. As we go in the name of God, we are confident that he will guide us.” Smith et. al., Book of Deeds, p. 79.
that the idea of Ferrer referring the matter directly to Abū Zakarīyā’ also seems doubtful. As a loyal servant of the crown of Aragon, Ferrer would be have no doubt consulted with his king before initiating diplomatic communication with another powerful Mediterranean state.\(^{513}\)

More plausible, and in fact quite historically useful, is Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s reference to the involvement of the Ḥafṣid amīr Abū Zakarīyā’ and his son Abū Yaḥyā. The fact that the former, from Tūnis, writes to the latter, in Bijāyah, strongly suggests that the events described occurred after 633/1235-6, the year when Abū Yaḥyā was appointed governor of Bijāyah. For Ḥarrālī’s part, because the period between his leaving Bijāyah and his death in 638/1241 in the Levant is geographically wide-ranging, as discussed further below, it is chronologically appropriate to assume that he departed from the city as early as 633/1235-6. Thus, it would appear that one of the very first tasks to have fallen on the shoulders of Abū Yaḥyā, the barely adolescent new governor of Bijāyah and of the entire western Ifrīqiyyā region, was presenting Ḥarrālī with an ultimatum.

But why did the Ḥafṣids react so harshly in the first place? At first view, Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s account may even tempt us to see a cruel irony in these events: here is a Muslim political figure agreeing with the judgement of a high-ranking church official that, in effect, an ecumenically-inclined Sufi had gravely erred in proposing benevolent cooperation between Muslims and Christians. This is, in fact, the interpretation proffered by Khayyāṭī. However, in my view such a reading is misguided, being the result of the failure to distinguish between the spirit of the letter

\(^{513}\) Possibly because of the significant gains he had acquired in the Balearics, Ferrer is judged by one historian to have been a better servant of the crown than of the church, especially in his later career. Burns notes that, after being consecrated as Bishop of Valencia around 1240, “[Ferrer] weakly allowed the king to absorb all the tithes and rentals on mosque properties, except for a third; that is, he signed away to the crown the bulk of the revenues which the infant church would need for proper growth. It is quite possible that Bishop Ferrer was, though not a tool of the king, at least too subservient. After all, the canons who were first installed at the capital were the king’s creatures…” Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, pp. 23.
itself—which undoubtedly tends towards ecumenism—and the Sabk’s narrative that is severely lacking in historical contextualization for reasons that are unclear. The contextual vacuum of Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s postscript in effect tempts the reader to falsely connect Ḥarrālī’s ecumenism (and Ferrer’s apparent anti-ecumenism) to the Ḥafṣid decision to banish Ḥarrālī from Bijāyah.

The critical context that Ibn Ṭawwāḥ fails to mention, and which Khayyāṭī and Van Koningsveld both overlook, is the foreign policy posture of Abū Zakaṭyā’ in those early years of his reign. Around the same time Ḥarrālī composed his letter, the founder of the Ḥafṣid dynasty was busy signing diplomatic and commercial treaties with a number of Mediterranean Christian powers: with Venice in 1231, Pisa in 1234, and Genoa in 1236. Marseille, for example, already in 1220 had established a consulate in Bijāyah (and was exporting wine to the city). These agreements galvanized maritime commercial activity in all of the ports of Ifrīqiyyā and on the whole proved economically lucrative to the nascent Ḥafṣid realm.514

Abū Zakaṭyā’ was keen on initiating commercial relations with Aragon too, though early on James I was understandably wary of the Tūnis’ intentions due to a couple of fraught incidents. The first occurred in 1232 when, shortly after James’ conquest of Majorca, a rumor spread among Catalans that the king in Tūnis was requisitioning Genovese and Pisan ships anchored in Ḥafṣid ports for an expedition to “take back” Majorca for the Muslims. That year, James I raced back to the island with the intention of defending it. In the event, the expected invasion never came. Nor is there any indication at all in Arabic sources of any Ḥafṣid intention to intervene in the Balearics. Nevertheless, Aragon adopted a guarded stance towards Tūnis following this incident. Ironically, because Majorca had been a major base of Muslim pirating activity, the

initial upshot of Aragon’s takeover of the island had been a marked increase in maritime traffic in the Western Mediterranean, including in the ports of Ifrīqiyya. After the 1232 scare, however, commercial activity between Catalan and Ifrīqiyyan ports quickly slackened once again.\textsuperscript{515}

In 1235, James I sent an embassy to Tūnis. Though we know little about the mission, it does suggest that there was an abiding, mutual desire for peace and trade (due to its timing, Aragon’s diplomatic mission may have been partly related to Ḥarrālī’s epistle). However, relations between Tūnis and Barcelona temporarily soured again in 1238 when Abū Zakarīyā (actually) intervened against James’ siege of Muslim Valencia. Valencia’s ruler Zayyān ibn Mardanīsh had dispatched the famous Andalusian bellettrist Ibn Abbār to Tūnis to request Ḥafṣid help in breaking the Aragon siege. Moved by the versified appeal read to him in court by Ibn Abbār, Abū Zakarīyā’ agreed to send a small flotilla carrying arms, supplies, and some troops. He stopped short, however, of committing himself personally to the fight as he was asked in the poem. However, the modest Ḥafṣid force, which may have been under instructions to exercise prudence and engage only if the situation could be realistically salvaged, was unable to break the siege and returned to Tūnis after having achieved very little. Valencia duly surrendered to James the Conqueror in September 1238.\textsuperscript{516}

After the failure at Valencia, Abū Zakarīyā’ adopted a more retracted posture vis-à-vis Aragon, a turn that paid off almost immediately: in 1239, as if the events at Valencia the previous year had never happened, commercial relations had been established between Tūnis and


Barcelona. According to Dufourcq, when it came to the relationship with Tūnis in particular, the Catalans’ mercantile spirit ultimately edged out the more militant tendencies of its religious leaders towards Muslims in general. The relationship between the Ḥafṣids and Aragon continued to blossom such that by the middle of the century the two were practically allies.517

It is not likely that the friendly Ḥafṣid-Aragonian relationship could have materialized without Abū Zakarīyā’ also sharing the Catalan sense of political pragmatism and desire for trade. Nor would Abū Zakarīyā’ have sought commercial relations with so many other Mediterranean Christian powers without this same internationalist outlook. As heir apparent of the floundering Almohad empire, Abū Zakarīyā’ was seen as the most powerful sovereign in the Muslim West. He was surely conscious of the potential glory to be had in countering Christian expansionism in Spain. Though the aid that was sent was inadequate and ultimately futile, Ḥafṣid sources are unanimous in emphasizing that Abū Zakarīyā’ was always prepared to come to the aid of his beleaguered co-religionists in Spain.518 True or not, these apologetic statements suggest that Andalusian expectations of heroic Ḥafṣid action were high. But I suspect that Abū Zakarīyā’ was just as pragmatic and trade-minded as the Catalans. His cautious moves reveal that he may have in fact secretly resented the pressure on him to commit his forces to overseas ventures, or for that matter, to initiate any type of hostile action that could disturb the basis of a future partnership with Aragon.

For his part, Ḥarrālī appears to have learned of his relatives’ capture quite earlier on. We know that his student Abū ʿAlī al-Andalūsī reaches Irbil requesting aid in September of 1230, that is, not long after Aragon’s subjugation of the island Majorca in the early months of that

517 Dufourcq, Espagne Catalane, pp. 96-104.
518 Rouighi, Emirate, p. 34.
same year. Thus, by the time the Tarragona letter affair comes to a head around 633/1235-6, Ḥarrālī may have already been agitating for the release of his relatives for several years. Further, the fact that Ḥarrālī had disciples like Abū ‘Alī al-Andalūsī soliciting aid from so far afield suggests that no such aid was forthcoming locally. In other words, it is likely that Ḥarrālī desperately asked for Ḥafṣid aid and was denied, or told to wait. This back-and-forth may have to some extent damaged, or had the potential to damage, Abū Zakarīyā’s pan-Islamic prestige. Tellingly, Irbil’s ruler Kukbūrī had reportedly responded to Abū ‘Alī al-Andalusī’s appeal by saying: “I am the most righteous [of rulers] to accede to your demand (anā aḥaqq man labbā da‘watākum)”. In sum, it is unlikely that it was the philosophical contents of Ḥarrālī’s letter that were problematic for the Ḥafṣids. Rather, it was Ḥarrālī attempt to reach out directly to Ferrer of Tarragona was itself viewed as an impertinent circumvention of Ḥafṣid authority that, from a public relations perspective, subverted the desiderative narrative of Abū Zakarīyā’ as the protector of Muslims against Christian aggression, and from the perspective of his own diplomatic calculus, caused an unnecessary complication in his already tenuous relationship with James of Aragon.

Despite the evidence presented here and the attempts at patching together what happened, many aspects of this affair remain mysterious. It is not clear, for example, why the Ḥafṣids preferred that Ḥarrālī emigrate to the Mashriq rather than to the Maghrib. Nor why Ibn Ṭawwāḥ appears to tie Ḥarrālī’s choice of the Mashriq as his preferred land of exile to the proverbial rise of his star (ṭala‘a bi-hi badran mushriqan). And even though he was writting under Ḥafṣid rule, it is still a wonder that Ibn Ṭawwāḥ lays no shred of blame at the feet of the Ḥafṣids for what seems a cruel and arbitrary treatment of Ḥarrālī. It should be noted that the only other context

provided by Ibn Ṭawwāḥ for this whole affair, besides the quoted postscript paragraph, is his rather laconic statement introducing his reproduction of Ḥarrālī’s letter: “Ḥarrālī was tried (imtuḥina) by the imprisonment of relatives of his (bi-asr aqārib la-hu)”. Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s statement appears to tie any and all grief suffered by Ḥarrālī solely to the internment of his relatives, and not to the political ramifications that he faced at the hands of the Ḥafṣids back in Bijāyah.

There is also the matter of squaring Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s open recital of the incident with the total silence of Ghubrīnī, Ḥarrālī’s other primary biographer and a contemporary of Ibn Ṭawwāḥ. As a Bijāyan native and a student of Ḥarrālī’s disciples, Ghubrīnī had even more access to information about Ḥarrālī’s sojourn in Bijāyah. Ghubrīnī’s silence on the dramatic circumstances of Ḥarrālī’s exit from the city can probably be safely put down to his aforementioned tendency to leave politically charged incidents off the record. At the same time, it is worth pointing out that almost all of Ḥarrālī’s Bijāyan disciples, including many of those closest to him, elected to remain in the city and apparently suffered no persecution due to their former association with him.

On the subject of Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, there are clues in the Sabk that partially explain his own motivations. The relevant passage, however, is not in Ḥarrālī’s notice but rather appears following that of Ibn ‘Arabī, where Ibn Ṭawwāḥ goes off on a long digression. It begins with a recapitulative statement concerning the subjects of the previous four biographical notices, namely, Abū Madyan (nr. 2), Shādhilī (nr. 3), Ḥarrālī (nr. 4), and Ibn ‘Arabī (nr. 5), (the first notice of the Sabk is dedicated to ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Mahdawī):
I have mentioned these four men—who are men of [spiritual] states, speech, and action—[because] each of them has been afflicted by a particular trial (wa kullun min-hum khuṣṣa bi-ibtilā'), and [each] has ascended to a pinnacle of brilliance and exaltedness (ṣa'ida dhirwata sanin wa-sanā' in).” 520

Following this statement, Ibn Ṭawwāḥ waxes auto-biographical. He begins by mentioning a personal dream of the Prophet he had in the year 704; he then expresses at length his admiration for saintly men and, tellingly, his disdain of antinomian pseudo-Sufis and small-minded fuqahā’ at whose hands he allegedly suffered persecution. At the very least, this lengthy tangent tells us that Ibn Ṭawwāḥ sees a close thematic connection between the trials suffered by the four aforementioned subjects and his own personal ordeals. In the Sabk, the common denominator uniting Abū Madyan, Ibn ‘Arabī, and Shādhilī appears to be their persecution at the hands of fuqahā’. Thus, even if Ibn Ṭawwāḥ does not specifically tie the Tarragona letter affair with this kind of persecution, the wider context of the Sabk arguably suggests that envious religious advisors or ill-wishing courtiers may have had something to do with the Ḥafṣids’ treatment of Ḥarrālī. 521

Finally, what of the fate of Ḥarrālī’s relatives? Taking Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s assertion at face value, it would appear that despite the priest’s initial recalcitrance, he ultimately saw the light and freed Ḥarrālī’s relatives. Such is the way Van Koningsveld views the episode. That is, its success was due to an improbable attempt to intervene through writing and through appealing to inter-religious harmony. Ḥarrālī’s case, as Van Koningsveld sees it, was an exceptional one in the history of Muslim captives in Christian Europe, where historically it was much more common

520 Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, Sabk, p. 97. The larger tangent (pp. 97-103) technically falls within the notice of Ibn ‘Arabī. However, all commentary related specifically to Ibn ‘Arabī clearly ends with the mention of Ibn ‘Arabī’s date of death and place of burial (p. 96).

that Muslim prisoners were ransomed either by the exchanging of prisoners at the state level or through the efforts of the relatives of the captives raising the funds required for ransom. However, since in Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s account there is some emphasis placed on Ḥarrālī’s barakah and “accession to God”, the episode can be partly understood as a case of saintly intervention—which is in fact one of the topics separately discussed in Van Koningsveld’s study.522

Beyond Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s account, I have found no evidence pertaining directly to Ḥarrālī’s relatives. Remarkably, however, there survives a legal document pertaining to other Muslim slaves owned by Ferrer de Pallarés. Dated to the year 1240, the purpose of the document is to define the legal status of two particular individuals as “independent vassals”, that is, that they enjoyed a semi-independent status, though they may have had to work their way up to it.523 As for Ferrer himself, it is worth noting that he was elected bishop of Valencia in that same year, 1240. However, a few short years later, in 1243 while he was traveling from Valencia to Barcelona to attend a state council, Ferrer was ambushed by a party of Muslims in the region North of Tortosa and taken prisoner. Despite the best efforts of his friend St. Peter Nolasco524 to ransom him, Ferrer was killed after a three-day period of captivity. Local Christian tradition tends to consider Ferrer a martyr. However, as Burns notes, the rationale for doing so is dubious

522 Van Koningsveld discusses this topic as a direct follow-on to the case of Ḥarrālī but does not apparently see the two as related. Van Koningsveld, Muslim Slaves, pp. 9-10.

523 The document dates to October 10th, 1240. The subjects in question are a couple transcribed as “Mofomet Assatja” and his wife “Axa” (‘Ā’ishah). Ferrer appears to have owned dozens if not hundreds of Muslim slaves. Lourie, Free Moslems, pp. 636, 644.

524 The figure of St. Peter Nolasco (ca. 1182-1256) also has an interesting position in the history of inter-religious slavery and captivity. He is the co-founder and the head of the Order of Our Lady of Mercy (Mercedarians), an important “ransomer group” whose function was to redeem Christian captives in Muslim lands. In its early years, the Order exercised this function in Muslim Valencia (before the Christian conquest in 1238) and in Algiers (under Ḥafṣid control after 632/1235). Burns, Crusader Kingdom, pp. 23, 247-52.
considering Ferrer’s “combat record” (in the Balearics especially) and the insurgent state of the territory he was travelling through.525

525 Ibid.
CHAPTER EIGHT: Final Sojourn in the Mashriq

This chapter looks at the events and figures associated with the final years of Ḥarrālī’s life, which begin after he is forced out of Bijāyah. This period of peregrination takes Ḥarrālī through Egypt, Jerusalem, Damascus, and finally Ḥamāh.
Salāwī\textsuperscript{526} (b. 614/1217 d. after 1285)

When Ḥarrālī left Bijāyah, one of the only disciples who accompanied him was Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Salāwī. For the next six years, as the two peregrinated through various cities in Egypt and the Levant, Salāwī devoted himself to Ḥarrālī as his personal retainer (khādim). Salāwī epitomizes the type of disciple whose own selfhood all but dissolves in the being of their spiritual master. During these final years of Ḥarrālī’s life, Salāwī reportedly kept a journal in which he recorded his master’s remarkable sayings and miraculous exploits (manāqib). Although apparently lost today, this document probably formed the basis of the sizeable body of karāmāt related by Ghubrīnī in the ‘Unwān. Salāwī also transcribed a number of Ḥarrālī’s works from direct dictation and committed others to memory. After Ḥarrālī’s death, Salāwī settled in Tunis and for the next forty years disseminated both Ḥarrālī’s writings and those of Abū al-Najīb al-Suhrawardī to the many scholars journeying between the Maghrib and the Mashriq.

Salāwī’s biography and his importance as a transmitter of Ḥarrālī’s corpus is gleaned primarily from Mil’ al-‘aybah \textit{(The filling of the suitcase)}, the famous seven-volume riḥlah by the renowned Maghribī traditionist Ibn Rushayd\textsuperscript{527} (657-721/1256-1321). The Mil’ appears to

\textsuperscript{526} Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qaysī al-Salāwī. The only dedicated notice in the primary biographical literature appears to be Ibn Rushayd’s Mil’ al-‘aybah. In Ghubrīnī’s ‘Unwān, which includes separate notices for many of Ḥarrālī’s Bijāyan disciples, Salāwī is only mentioned in passing (probably because he never settled in Bijāyah permanently). See Ibn Rushayd, Mil’ al-‘aybah, vol. 2, pp. 295-308; Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, pp. 149, 151-2; Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, Sabk, pp. 97-8. In the secondary literature, see Makhlūf, Shajarat al-nūr, vol. 1, p. 266, nr. 651; Kh. 2011, p. 97; Ḥaddādī, Riḥlat Ibn Rushayd, pp. 325-6, nr. 89; Maḥfūẓ, Tarājim al-mu’allifīn al-Tūnisīyīn, vol. 5, pp. 235-6, nr. 653.

\textsuperscript{527} Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar ibn Muḥammad “Ibn Rushayd” al-Fihrī al-Sabṭī. Born in Sabtah (Ceuta), among Ibn Rushayd’s early teachers was Ibn Abī al-Rabī’ (d. 688/1289) the doyen of grammar studies in the city, which by the end of the 13\textsuperscript{th} century had taken on the mantle of the belles-lettres in the Maghrib as Andalusian urban centers declined. Other important teachers from around the Muslim world include Abū al-Qāsim Ibn Juzayy (d. 741/1340), Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnāṭī (d. 745/1344), and Aḥmad ibn Hibatallāh Ibn ‘Asākir (d. 699/1300). Ibn Rushayd undertook his famous riḥlah between 683/1284 and 686/1287. Although from a geopolitical perspective the Mil’ is a letdown, its important biographical, ḥadīth, and literary content does provide us with a panoramic view of the intellectual scene.
contain the only dedicated notice of Salāwī in all of the primary biographical literature.\footnote{Salāwī’s notice is consistent with the overall style of the Mil’. Presented like a curriculum vitae, it cites the teachers with whom Salāwī studied, what works were studied, and, in some cases, when and where the study took place. Interspersed are lines of poetry by Ḥarrālī and anecdotes about him. Salāwī’s notice in the Mil’ is lengthy, thematically disorganized and requires a laborious effort to reconstruct if one is looking specifically for information on Ḥarrālī. Ultimately, however, some of the information contained in the Mil’ is original and useful.} In the course of his well-known rihlah to the Mashriq, Ibn Rushayd encountered Salāwī in Tūnīs in the year 684/1285.\footnote{In his study of the Mil’, Ḥaddādī notes that Ibn Rushayd met Salāwī both on his way to the Mashriq and on his way back. Ḥaddādī’s study contains several bits of information on Salāwī which I have not been able to personally verify in the edition of Mil’ at my disposal. Ḥaddādī, Rihlat Ibn Rushayd, p. 325.} After what was probably only a brief consort, Ibn Rushayd received an ijāzah in practically everything that Salāwī had learned, including works by Ḥarrālī and others. Salāwī also granted a similar ijāzah to Ibn Qaṭrāl\footnote{Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammd ibn ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Qaṭrāl. Among his reported accomplishments is a commentary on the poetry of the Spanish Ibn Sahl al-Isrā’īlī al-Ishbīlī (b. ca. 609/1212, d. 649/1251), who was a Jewish convert to Islam. See Marrakushī, al-I’lām, vol. 4, pp. 338-340, nr. 586. ‘Asqalānī, al-Durar al-kāminah, vol. 4, pp. 83-4, nr. 232. On al-Isrā’īlī see Monés, EI2, “Ibn Sahl”.} (d. 710/1310), a juridical Sufi scholar from Marrakesh and Ibn Rushayd’s apparent companion on the rihlah.

Although respectful of Salāwī’s piety, and clearly cognizant of the caliber of the teachers the latter had studied under, Ibn Rushayd openly questions Salāwī’s own competence as a scholar. He notes, for example, that “[Salāwī] diligently memorized all or most of [Ḥarrālī’s] works, and would write them down from memory—only, he did not uphold the rules of grammar as they

in the Islamic world at the end of the 13th century. On his voyage, Ibn Rushayd also studied under the Bijāyan legist (and Ḥarrālī’s former student) ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ibn Kaḥilā. Regrettably, however, the third volume of the Mil’—pertaining specifically to the Bijāyah, Sabtah, and Almeria phases of his journey—has not been recovered. Ibn Rushayd also intended to study under Ḥarrālī’s former student Ibn Abī al-Dunya (d. 684/1285), however, he arrived while the latter was on his deathbed and, as he laments, could only attend his funeral. On returning from his voyage, Ibn Rushayd occupied influential posts in Granada, Marrakesh, and Fez. See Dhahabī, Ta’rīkh, vol. 53, pp. 210-16. Ferhat, Sabta, pp. 424-5. Arié, EI2, “Ibn Rushayd”. Vidal-Castro, EI3, “Ibn Rushayd”, with additional references.
ought to be upheld”.531 In Ibn Rushayd’s estimation, the works of Ḥarrālī that had been transmitted by way of Salāwī were ridden with errors.532 Ibn Rushayd also criticizes Salāwī for being forgetful of the names of teachers and their genealogies. Regarding his character, Ibn Rushayd observes that Salāwī “exhibited an ingenuousness (sadhājah) bordering on stupidity (balah)”.532

There might be some truth to these criticisms. The ingenuousness that Ibn Rushayd saw in Salāwī may have been partly the influence of Ḥarrālī to whom Salāwī was so loyally devoted. In some of his professional and personal dealings, Ḥarrālī arguably exhibits a type of naïve and childlike artlessness, even if, on the evidence of his extant corpus, he could in no wise be characterized as “stupid”. But it is probably fair to say that, for his part, Salāwī was more of a passive recipient of his master’s intellectual legacy. Ḥarrālī’s own reported assessment of Salāwī—as having an aptitude for “teaching the Qur’ān”—suggests a modest intellectual range.533 Yet it should also be remembered that, by the time Ibn Rushayd met Salāwī in 684/1285, the latter would have been fairly advanced in age, meaning that a natural senility could have set in, while Ibn Rushayd, one imagines, was that young, up-and-coming scholar who judged his teachers with the exacting and unsentimental mindset of a muḥaddith.


532 It should be noted that, firstly, Salāwī would have hardly been the only avenue by which Ḥarrālī’s corpus was disseminated. Secondly, to date no manuscript copies of Ḥarrālī’s works have been found to contain conspicuous grammatical errors or an inordinate amount corrective commentary on the margins.

533 Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān al-dirāyah, pp. 150-1. Elsewhere in the ‘Unwān, Ghubrīnī’s own characterization of Salāwī as a faqīh is not necessarily an indication that jurisprudence was his specialty. In Ghubrīnī’s idiolect, the term “faqīh” is usually used a marker designating a bare minimum of intellectual competence. Ghubrīnī’s characterization of Salāwī as al-sālih does, however, suggest a discernable virtuousness. Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, pp. 149, 151-2. See also Urvoy, Structuration, pp. 92-3.
Salāwī, as his *nisbah* suggests, was born and raised in the Moroccan city of Sale. He grew up in the house of his maternal grandfather who liked to play host to literature-minded scholars. The young Salāwī was tutored by some of these visitors, such as the belletrist Abū Bakr Ibn Hishām al-Qurṭubī\(^{534}\) (d. 635/1237-8). When Salāwī later emigrated to the Mashriq, he put himself in the service of a number of scholars and spiritual mentors, earning himself the sobriquet *khādim al-mashā’ikh*. Some of Salāwī’s teachers in the Mashriq were specialists in *ḥadīth*. He studied the compilations of Muslim and Bukhārī, for example, under Ibn al-Muqayyar al-Najjār\(^{535}\) (545-643/1151-1246). Salāwī also studied Tirmīdhī’s *al-Shamā’il* under Rashīd al-Dīn al-‘Aṭṭār\(^{536}\) (584-662/1188-1264).

Aside from Ḥarrālī, the most notable of Salāwī’s teachers is the Sufi theologian Tāj al-Dīn al-Sharīshī\(^{537}\) (d. 641/1243). Sharīshī’s life is well worth adumbrating here because he is an exact


\(^{536}\) Rashīd al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥusayn Yahyā ibn ‘Alī...ibn Mufarrij al-Qurashī “al-`Aṭṭār”. A native of Cairo, where he appears to have spent his career. Ziriklī, *A'lām*, vol. 8, p. 159; Dhahabī, *Ta'rīkh al-Islām*, vol. 49 (years 661-670), pp. 120-1, nr. 80. Udfuwī, *Badr*, vol. 2, pp. 1108-9, nr. 556, with additional references.

contemporary of Ḥarrālī and the two would almost certainly have been co-disciples during their early years in the Far Maghrib. Born in Sale in 581/1185-6 and raised in Marrakesh, Sharīshī completed his higher education in Fez under some of the same teachers who trained Ḥarrālī, including the theologians Ibn al-Kattānī and Ibn al-Baqqāl and the linguist Abū Dharr al-Khushanī. Like Ḥarrālī, Sharīshī evinces a well-rounded scholarly profile, being competent in the disciplines of Mālikī fiqh, uṣūl, literature, Sufism, and even medicine.\(^{538}\) The fact that Tāj al-Dīn’s father\(^{539}\), who was a qāḍī in Sale and Miknās, features in the biographical record of the Maghrib, whereas his son is better represented by Mashriqī biographers, suggests that Tāj al-Dīn, like Ḥarrālī, emigrated to the Mashriq at a young age.

It is unclear, however, whether Sharīshī and Ḥarrālī set off to the Mashriq together as travel companions.\(^{540}\) Once they left the Maghrib, there is a clear divergence in the teachers under whom each studied. For example, Sharīshī continued his uṣūl studies in Cairo under Taqīyy al-

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Sharīshīs discussed here should be confused with Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd al-Mu’min al-Sharīshī (d. 619/1222), author of commentaries on the Maqāmāt of al-Ḥarīrī.

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\(^{538}\) Besides references to his medical expertise by his biographers, Sharīshī himself alludes to his skill as a healer in one of his poems. See Ibn al-Mustawfī, Tārīkh Irbil, vol. 1, p. 433.


\(^{540}\) One possible indication that Ḥarrālī and Sharīshī maintained relations is to be found in Ibn Mustawfī’s Tārīkh Irbil. The latter work contains, as previously mentioned, a notice on Abū ‘Alī al-Andalusī, an early disciple of Ḥarrālī who arrived in Irbil in 628/1230 on a mission to request aid for Majorcan prisoners of war. The notice immediately following that of Abū ‘Alī is that of one Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā al-Maghribī who arrives in Irbil in Safar 628/1230-1, thus only a few months following Abū ‘Alī’s arrival. Although no connection between the two is explicit indicated—in fact, al-Maghribī’s notice provides very little information of any kind—the Tārīkh does relate some lines of poetry sung by Sharīshī, whom al-Maghribī apparently considered his shaykh. Ibn al-Mustawfī, Tārīkh Irbil, vol. 1, pp. 432-3.
Dīn al-Muqtaraḥ ⁵⁴¹ (526-612/1132-1215). Sharīshī also studied usūl in Alexandria under Abū al-Ḥasan al-Abyārī ⁵⁴² (557-618/1162-1221). Ḥarrālī and Sharīshī seem to have taken different paths in the domain of Sufism as well. Ḥarrālī’s meeting with al-Fakhr al-Fārisī is the only indication that he had any association with Eastern currents of Sufism.⁵⁴³ On the other hand, Sharīshī is known to have visited Baghdād where he became a disciple of ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Jīlānī ⁵⁴⁴ (d. 603/1207), one of the sons of the famous Ḥanbalī theologian, preacher, and Şūfi ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 651/1166). More importantly, Sharīshī was also the disciple of Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ ‘Umar al-Suhrawardī (539-632/1145-1234), one of the most important Sufis in Sunni Islam and the founder of Suhrawardīyah order.⁵⁴⁵

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⁵⁴³ As for Sharīshī, while I have not found any direct evidence of his meeting al-Fakhr al-Fārisī, such an association is possible since both men were apparently confidants of the Ayyūbid monarch al-Kāmil (r. 1218-1238). In his study of the Mil‘, Ḥaddādī’s writes that Salāwī (Ḥarrālī’s student) related to Ibn Rushayd stories about Sharīshī being part of al-Kāmil’s travel entourage. See Ḥaddādī, Rihlat Ibn Rushayd, pp. 325-6.

⁵⁴⁴ Ohlander, EI3, “‘Abd al-Razzāq b. ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī”.

⁵⁴⁵ Despite his later opposition to kalām, Suhrawardī had been an avid student of kalām earlier in his career. It would be interesting to know what kind of counsel Suhrawardī gave to his student Sharīshī on
The list of titles attributed to Sharīshī reflects his wide scholarly range. The works that Salāwī studied at Sharīshī’s feet, however, revolve primarily around Sufism. Foremost among these is ‘Awārif al-ma’ārif, Suhrawardī’s famous vade-mecum of Sufi spirituality. Another was Sharīshī’s own poem Anwār al-sarā’ir wa-sarā’ir al-anwār (The Lights of the Innermost Secrets and the Innermost Secrets of the Lights). Known also as Rā’iyat al-Sharīshī, this work is a versified abridgement of a particular section of the ‘Awārif that deals with the relationship between master and disciple. Also studied by Salāwī was Sharīshī’s Suḥbat al-mashā’ikh, which is probably of a similar vein as his Anwār.

In his seminal work on Maghribī Sufism al-Dhabab al-ibrīz min kalām Sayyidī ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Dabbāgh (Pure gold from the words of...Dabbāgh), Aḥmad ibn al-Mubārak al-Lamaṭī (d. 1156/1743) structures his commentary on the ‘Awārif around Sharīshī’s poem. Pointing to the long commentary on the Rā’iyah by Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf al-Fāsī (d. 1021/1612-3), Lamaṭī affirms that Sharīshī’s poem had long been valued in Moroccan Sufi circles. Thus, while the influence of Suhrawardī eastwards in Persia and India has been well documented, the longstanding popularity of Sharīshī’s poem in the Maghrib suggests, according to Radtke, that Suhrawardī’s

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this subject, given that the latter came to him well-versed in kalām from teachers in Morocco and Egypt. On Suhrwardī’s biography see Ohlander’s Sufism in an Age of Transition: ‘Umar al-Suhrawardī and the Rise of the Islamic Mystical Brotherhoods.

546 Suyūṭī (Bughyat) lists around a dozen titles by Sharīshī including: Kitāb tawḥīd al-Risālah, al-Risālah fī usūl al-dīn, Kitāb asná al-mawāhib, Sharḥ al-mufaṣṣal (grammar), Sharḥ al-Jazūliyah (grammar), Kitāb ‘awārif al-hudā wa-hudā al-‘awārif, and a work on samā’.

547 Fāsī’s commentary is titled Hādhā Sharḥ Rā’iyat al-‘allāmah al-shahīr wa-al-ustādh al-kabīr khātimat al-muḥaqiqīn bi-lā nizā’ wa-qudwat al-wāṣilīn bi-lā difā’ al-Imām Abī al-‘Abbās Tāj al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Bakrī al-ma’rūf bi-al-Sharīshī. This work was printed alongside Sharīshī’s Rā’iyah in Cairo in 1316/1898.
influence also penetrated quite early on to the Far West.\textsuperscript{548} One might also speculate that, since it was Salāwī who passed on the *Anwār* and the *Rā‘iyah* to Ibn Rushayd—who in turn disseminated his acquired knowledge in the Maghrib upon his return—this humble servant of Ḥarrālī may have in fact played a crucial, if passive, role in this early Westward transmission of Suhrawardī’s legacy.\textsuperscript{549}

Turning to Salāwī’s companionship with Ḥarrālī himself, we are told in the *Mil’* that it lasted for a period six years, although no precise start or end dates are given. However, one anecdotal account in the *Mil’* involving both Salāwī and Ḥarrālī is specifically dated to Muḥarram of 638 (around July, 1240), mere months before Ḥarrālī’s death. We can therefore reasonably assume that Salāwī attached himself to Ḥarrālī some six years prior, in 632/1234-5. It is also fairly safe to assume that, from a geographical point of view, this companionship started in Bijāyah, since the *‘Unwān* includes an account of a *karāmah* reportedly witnessed by Salāwī in this city.\textsuperscript{550} The *‘Unwān* also contains an anecdote in which Ḥarrālī—describing the particular talents and future prospects of some of his disciples—says on the subject of Salāwī: “As for this Salāwī (wa-ammā hadhā al-Salāwī), wherever he alights he will be a leader (*imām*) of Muslims and will teach the Magnificent Qur’ān”.\textsuperscript{551}


\textsuperscript{549} At the end of a biographical section on Sharīshī in *al-Dhahab al-ibrīz*, Lamaṭī actually mentions Salāwī: “the godly shaykh Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qaysī al-Salāwī who resided in Tunis has transmitted [works] from [Sharīshī]” (p. 725). No other students of Sharīshī or direct transmitters of his works are mentioned. It should be noted that, in their commentary, Radtke and O’Kane were not able to identify the figure of Salāwī, which is understandable given the overall dearth of information available in the biographical literature.

\textsuperscript{550} Ghubrīnī, *‘Unwān al-dirāyah*, p. 149.

\textsuperscript{551} Ḥarrālī’s use of what could be construed as an expression of endearment—*hadhā al-Salāwī*—reinforces the view that Salāwī was an intimate disciple. It also suggests that Salāwī was physically close
To some extent, the different stages of Ḥarrālī’s post-Bijāyah itinerary can be inferred from various details scattered throughout Salāwī’s lengthy notice in Mil’. Thus, for instance, a recollection of one of Salāwī’s dreams appears to place Ḥarrālī in Egypt shortly after his exit from Bijāyah:

I was in Egypt (Mīṣr) when I saw the Prophet in a state of sleep (ra’aytu al-nabīy fī al-manām). As I was greeting him he said to me: “How is the state of ‘Alī (kayf ḡāl ‘Alī)?” I said to him: “In good health, O Messenger of God”. Whereby he said: “What has delayed him from us (ayyu shay’ abīa’a bi-hi ‘annā)? We are awaiting him. The meeting between us and him is three (al-mī‘ād baynā wa-baynahu thalāthah).” Thus [he said it] in such ambiguous terms (hākadhā mubhamah). Three years later [Ḥarrālī] passed away in the city of Ḥamāh. 552

Based on Salāwī’s assured response to the Prophet’s query, we can reasonably assume that he was accompanying Ḥarrālī at the time. We can therefore tentatively say that around 635/1237-8, or three years before his death, Ḥarrālī was passing though Egypt. The timestamps associated with Salāwī’s apprenticeship with Sharīshī are also instructive. Thus, in 636/1238-9, we may presume that Ḥarrālī was in Cairo, since that is where Salāwī recalls studying the ‘Awārif at the hands of Sharīshī. 553 The following year, in 637/1239-40, Salāwī studied new texts with Sharīshī (his Suḥbat al-mashā’ikh) but this time in the city of Fayyūm. 554 It is thus probable that Sharīshī, Salāwī, and Ḥarrālī together made the journey from Cairo south to Fayyūm. But whereas Sharīshī seems to have lived out his days in this oasis town, Ḥarrālī soon left Egypt.


553 According to the Mil’, Salāwī studied ‘Awārif al-maʿārif under Sharīshī in Cairo in the year 636 (Mil’, vol. 2, p. 301). That same year, Salāwī reportedly also studied under the aforementioned Cairene traditionists Ibn al-Muqayyar al-Najjār (pp. 299-300) and al-Rashīd al-ʿAṭṭār (p. 300). For reasons that remain unclear, these “side” apprenticeships of Salāwī all occur between the years 636 and 638. In the Mil’, the next recorded event in Salāwī’s life is his meeting with Ibn Rushayd—four decades later in 684.

554 Ibn Rushayd, Mil’ al-‘aybah, pp. 301-302.
Piecing together the itinerary of Ḥarrālī during his final years requires drawing on multiple, fragmentary sources. Thus, alongside the information obtained from the Mil’, one must also consider Ghubrīnī’s report that, upon first arriving from Bijāyah, Ḥarrālī settled in the town of Bilbīs, about a day’s walk North East of Cairo in the Nile Delta:

The eminent residents [of the town] rallied to him and benefited from him and followed him. Ḥarrālī’s intent was to head to the city of the Messenger (madīnat al-rasūl). However, his travel plans fell through for logistical reasons (lam yatahayya’ la-hu masīr). Thereupon, he repaired to the Levant, taking with him neither his son nor any of his companions, only a special wife—perhaps because he knew he was going to die there, and God knows best. Upon arriving in the Levant he settled in Ḥamāh.⁵⁵⁵

Ḥarrālī’s reported stay in Bilbīs might have occurred just prior to his (surmised) stay in Cairo with Salāwī, while his unsuccessful attempt to travel to Madīnah may have been related to his (surmised) travel south to Fayyūm. Ghubrīnī’s mention of a son probably refers to the (unnamed) son Ḥarrālī had with his Bijāyan wife Karīmah. However, given the latter’s choleric character, it is doubtful that she would have been the wife Ḥarrālī selected as his travel companion.⁵⁵⁶

The ‘Unwān’s account of the final years of Ḥarrālī’s life is deficient in that it omits a crucial stage of Ḥarrālī’s sojourn to the Levant, namely, his passage through Jerusalem and Damascus. For this we have to turn once again to the Mil’ which contains anecdotal details that significantly enrich our understanding of this stage of Ḥarrālī’s biography. For example, a Salāwī-related account of a karāmāh, which already implicitly contradicts the ‘Unwān’s claim that Ḥarrālī left all his companions behind in Egypt, also contains details suggesting that Ḥarrālī visited one or more important religious sites in Jerusalem on his journey north:

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⁵⁵⁵ This account is based on unspecified sources (dhakara baḍ al-nās). Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 153.

⁵⁵⁶ Perhaps it was Rashīqah, the dark-skinned bondsmaid (jāriyah) for whom Ḥarrālī had sung a poem in Cairo some years earlier. The poem is recorded in the notice of Abū ‘Alī al-Andalūsī in Ibn al-Mustawfī, Tārīkh Irbil, vol. 1, pp. 431-2.
I attended with [Ḥarrālī] an audition (samā’) in Jerusalem (al-bayt al-muqaddas), whereat some non-Arab Sufis (fiqarā’a ājim) were murmuring (yuzumzūmuna) in a foreign language. The Shaykh [Ḥarrālī] was overcome by a licit ecstatic state (waṣdun sunnī) and I was perplexed by him. I said to myself: God be praised! What could he possibly comprehend from their audition based solely on nasalized melodies (al-ghinnah)? By God, scarcely had the thought formed in my mind when he said to me: “samā’ is a wine imbibed by the soul through the aperture of the ears in acoustic cups, not discriminating between Arab and non-Arab, the servant can be made to hear [it] from [any faculty whichever], and all peoples are aware of their drinking fountain (mashrabahum)”.557

Parenthetically, the karāmah described above may classified as in instance of reading the thoughts of others (mukāshfat al-dhikr). Ḥarrālī’s reported attendance of a Sufi audition (in a non-Arabic tongue) in Jerusalem appears to be more or less happenstance, in the sense that he did not deliberately seek out the session. Nor is there any direct evidence to the effect that he regularly attended sessions of this kind elsewhere. There is, however, at least one other occasions in the biographical literature where Ḥarrālī is described as being seized by an ecstatic state. As well, we have previously reviewed evidence suggesting that Ḥarrālī had a particular affinity for music.558

Unfortunately, little else is known about Ḥarrālī’s stay in Jerusalem.559 Assuming that Ḥarrālī arrived in the region shortly after around 637/1239-40 (the year when Salāwī studies with Sharīshī in Fayyūm), he may have passed through Jerusalem shortly after the Crusaders surrendered the city to the Ayyūbid prince al-Nāṣir Dāwūd on 8 Jumāda II 637 (= 5 January

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558 In Bijāyah, Ḥarrālī’s student ‘Abd al-Wāḥid al-Kātib was a musician. Ḥarrālī also has some epigrams (ḥikam) which touch on the metaphysical aspects of music. See chapter “Bijāyah”, section “Other Students”.

559 Oddly enough, in Hillenbrand’s illustrated volume Ayyubid Jerusalem, Ḥarrālī is cited as a rare example of a Mālikī-affiliated scholar of Western origin to have passed through Jerusalem during the Ayyūbid era. Curiously, however, the only sources cited in this work are Ḥarrālī’s notices in Maqqarī (Nafḥ) and Dhahabī (Ta’rikh) which do not mention his visit to Jerusalem. Hillenbrand et al., Ayyubid Jerusalem, pp. 198-9.
Besides the haram itself, one attraction for Ḥarrālī may have been the tomb of the feted Sufi shaykh Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qurashi⁵⁶¹ (d. 599/1203), who was the master of Qurṭubī, Ḥarrālī’s revered tafsīr teacher and possible spiritual mentor. But we may never know for sure whether Ḥarrālī specifically made use of some of the great monuments that were erected in the early Ayyūbid period, like al-khānaqāh al-Ṣalahīyah, founded by Saladin and one of the main Sufi centers in Jerusalem, or al-madrasah al-Afdalīyah, a Mālikī-oriented institution located in Jerusalem’s Maghāribah quarter which was built in 590/1194 by Saladin’s eldest son al-Afdal (d. 622/1225).⁵⁶²

Another journal entry by Salāwī preserved in the Mil’ states that in the early days of the month of Muḥarram of the year 638 (around July, 1940), in the Kallāsah⁵⁶³ adjacent to the Umayyad mosque of Damascus and the mausoleum of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn⁵⁶⁴, Ḥarrālī dictated to Salāwī a work titled Kitāb al-waṣīyah li-sālik tarīq al-ṣūfīyah.⁵⁶⁵ It’s quite astonishing to note that, not counting Ḥarrālī’s date and place of death, this dated journal entry of Salāwī’s represents the

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⁵⁶⁰ Hillenbrand, Ayyubid Jerusalem, p. 16, 162f.

⁵⁶¹ Based on Qurashi’s notice in Ibn Khallikān’s Wafayāt, Hillenbrand writes: “The funeral prayer was said over [Qurashi] in the Aqṣa Mosque. His tomb attracted pious visitors who sought favor from God through the merits of the holy man buried in Jerusalem.” Hillenbrand et al., Ayyubid Jerusalem, p. 18.

⁵⁶² On al-khānaqāh al-Ṣalahīyah and al-madrasah al-Afdalīyah, see Hillenbrand et al., Ayyubid Jerusalem, pp. 230-4, and pp. 199, 220, respectively.

⁵⁶³ Citing Ibn Jubayr, Morray states that “the Kallāsah was the precinct situated on the north side of the Banū Umayyah Mosque, that is, the maqṣūrahs situated in the precinct beyond the north gate to the courtyard of the mosque.” It seems to have been a popular spot for teaching sessions and hadīth hearings. Morray, Ayyubid Notable, p. 32, 47f, 90, 156-8.

⁵⁶⁴ The mausoleum of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn (d. 1193) was erected in 1196.

⁵⁶⁵ Ibn Rushayd, Mil’, p. 301.
only occasion, in all of the primary literature, in which Ḥarrālī is placed in a particular geographical location at a specific date.

Besides Kitāb al-wašiyah, which appears to be lost, Salāwī also transcribed several other works from Ḥarrālī’s dictation: a commentary on the Qurʾān, a commentary on al-Irshād (presumably Juwaynī’s), a work titled al-Imān al-tām bi-nubuwwat Muḥammad ‘alayhi al-salām, and one titled Risālat nuṣḥin ‘ām li-kulli man qāla rabī-Allāh thumma istaqām. It would appear that towards the end of his life Ḥarrālī increased his literary production and took steps to ensure the survival of his legacy. It should also be mentioned that the colophon of one of Ḥarrālī’s manuscripts states that the copyist completed his work at the Ṣāḥibīyah madrasah in Damascus at the end of Rajab, 637 (= late Feb, 1240). This suggests that the copyist probably wrote it down from direct dictation from Ḥarrālī.568

The Mil‘ also indicates that while in Damascus Salāwī meets Ibn ‘Arabī:

I met the great vanguard (al-ṣadr al-kabīr), the excellent Sufi master (al-ṣayyid al-fāḍil al-ṣūfī) Muḥyī al-Dīn…ibn ‘Arabī…in the city of Damascus. He awarded me a certification in all of his writings (ajāz lī fī kull mā ‘alayh khaṭṭuh)…in the year 637, may God be pleased with all of them [i.e. Ibn ‘Arabī, Sharīshī, and Ḥarrālī].569

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566 Ḥarrālī’s corpus and attributed works are discussed in the next chapter.

567 There is other evidence that confirms this theory. For example, the colophon of one of the copies of the Miftāḥ (Tri. II) indicates that it was recopied by a certain Mūsā ibn ‘Alī ibn Shāmah at the Śāḥibīyah madrasah in Damascus on 28 Rajab, 637 (= 23 February, 1240). Colophon cited in Kh. 97, p. 117. Incidentally, the Śāḥibīyah madrasah which is located in the Śāliḥiyah quarter of Damascus was built between 1233-1245 by Rābi‘ah Khattūn, a sister of Śālāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī who endowed the institution through a waqf for the Ḥanbalī school of law. Miura, The Śāliḥīyya, p. 172.

568 ‘The manuscript in question is a copy of the second book of the Miftāḥ, Ḥarrālī’s trilogy on tafsīr. The manuscript is housed in Madrid’s Escorial under the number 1440. The copyist is a certain Mūsā ibn ‘Alī ibn Shāmah, who does not seem to feature in the biographical literature. Cited in Kh. 1997, pp. 13, 117.

569 Ibn Rushayd, Mil‘, p. 302.
A few months later (Muḥarram 638/July 1240) in Ibn ‘Arabī’s own house in Damascus (fi ghurfat dārih), Salāwī and Ibn ‘Arabī engaged in a “clasping of hands”, a symbolic ritual that is a way of connecting with the Prophet (mushābakah muṭṭasilah bi-al-nabīy). With origins in certain practices of ḥadīth folk, the mushābakah ritual seems to have been appropriated by Sufis in the Mashriq. In some contexts, it came to be regarded as an official form of initiatic investiture—next to other forms like al-muṣāfaḥah, ilbās al-khirqah, talqīn al-dhikr, al-tamkīn—which formally attaches a disciple to a particular spiritual master. In Salāwī’s case, however, the intention appears to have been merely partaking of the spiritual presence (tabarruk), rather than committing himself as a disciple of Ibn ‘Arabī.

Thus, while Ḥarrālī certainly represented his primary educator and spiritual model (qudwatunā), Salāwī was just as eager to benefit from the teachings and spiritual presence of other shuyūkh. To be sure, Salāwī’s mushābakah with Ibn ‘Arabī in 1240 seems to have been

570 Salāwī’s account of the mushābakah is reproduced in the Mil’: “I entwined by fingers with the fingers of the leading shaykh (al-shaykh al-imām) and perfect savant (al-‘ālim al-kāmil), the shaykh of his age (shaykh ‘asrīh), the nonpareil of his time (farīd dārih), Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Ḥātamī al-Ṭā’ī, may God be pleased with him, [who] had entwined his fingers with the fingers of the shaykh Aḥmad ibn Mas‘ūd ibn Shaddād the Qur’ān reciter from Mawṣīl, [who] had entwined his fingers with the fingers of the shaykh ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Bājabbārī, [who] had entwined his fingers with the fingers of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bāghūzārī the sermonizer of Bājabbār (sic). [The latter] said: I saw the Messenger of God in [my] sleep and he said: O ‘Alī, clasp my hands for whosoever clasps my hands will enter paradise, and whosoever clasps the hands of one who has clasped my hands will enter paradise. And he repeated this phrase seven times.” Ibn Rushayd, Mil’, pp. 302-3. This particular mushābakah tracing back al-Bāghūzārī is also cited in Fāsī’s al-Minaḥal bādīyah (vol. 1, p. 305); included in the silsilah of the Mināḥ are the figures of Ibn ‘Arabī and his disciple Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī.


572 As will be discussed below, Ḥarrālī, too, met Ibn ‘Arabī in Damascus. Thus, it is likely that Salāwī’s mushābakah with Ibn ‘Arabī occurred with Ḥarrālī’s full knowledge and perhaps even in his presence. It is worth pointing out that Salāwī’s relationships with Ibn ‘Arabī and with Sharīshī reflects, not only the free-form nature of Sufism practiced among Maghribīs at the time, but also Ḥarrālī’s particular lack of possessiveness over his disciples. A similar observation holds in the case of Salāwī’s supplementary studentship under traditionists like Ibn al-Muqayyar and Rashīd al-‘Aṭṭār in Cairo. That is, there seems to be a recognition on some level that, despite Ḥarrālī’s wide-ranging scholarship which includes ḥadīth
a deeply cherished moment in his life: four decades later (on Friday the 3rd of Rabī‘ II 684 = 8th June, 1285 as the Mil’ diligently attests), Salāwī in turn clasped the hands of Ibn Rushayd. Meaning that in the interim Salāwī had probably never ceased continuing the practice with any and all takers. Salāwī was someone who never missed an opportunity to imbibe the barakah of shuyūkh and transmit it as faithfully as he can. After Ḥarrālī’s death, and true to his appellation khādim al-mashā‘ikh, Salāwī attached himself to other saintly men like Abū al-Faḍl Qāsim al-Qurashi (d. 662/1264). Eventually, Salāwī settled in Tūnis, where he served as the imām in the mosque overseen by jurist and belletrist Abū Bakr Ibn Ḥabīsh (b. 615/1218). Salāwī reportedly would spend countless hours talking with Ibn Ḥabīsh about Sufi saints, their knowledge, their virtues, and their miraculous feats.

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obviously, he does not pretend to have the same level of encyclopedic mastery in the discipline as lifelong specialists and he presumably considered Salāwī’s studying ḥadīth under such professionals as beneficial.

573 Salāwī’s mushābakah with Ibn Rushayd and potentially with other individuals would have been historically atypical in Ifrīqiyya where, according to ‘Āmirī, the practice did not become common until the 8th/14th century. ‘Āmirī, *al-Taṣawwuf bi-Ifrīqiyyah*, pp. 225-6.

574 Abū al-Faḍl Qāsim ibn Muhammad al-Qurashi al-Qurṭubī. Born and raised in Cordoba but emigrated from Spain early on and ended his days in Bijāyah. Abū al-Faḍl also seems to have been revered by Ḥarrālī’s other student Abū Zakariyā’ Ibn Maḥjūbah. Ghubrīnī, *‘Unwān*, pp.174-7, nr. 33.

The foregoing chronological considerations, based on the data supplied in the *Mil’*, allow us to assume with reasonable certainty that Ḥarrālī arrived in Damascus around 637/1239-40.\(^{576}\) Beyond Ḥarrālī’s interactions with Salāwī, however, only two other accounts of his time in Damascus have come down to us. One is Ḥarrālī’s encounter with the famous Shāfi‘ī jurist ʿIzz al-Dīn ibn ʿAbd al-Salām al-Sulamī\(^ {577}\) (d. 660/1262). Ḥarrālī’s arrival in the city appears to have closely coincided with ‘Izz al-Dīn’s promotion to the post of preacher (*khaṭīb*) at the Umayyad mosque.\(^ {578}\) ʿIzz al-Dīn no doubt became aware of the presence of the newly arrived Maghribī shaykh because Ḥarrālī, as Salāwī tells us, lectured in and around the Ummayad mosque and the adjacent Kallāsah precinct.

Intrigued by some of the ideas Ḥarrālī was promoting, especially in the field of *tafsīr*—and perhaps also having been previously warned of Ḥarrālī’s “antinomian” tendencies by their shared Ifrīqiyan student Ibn Abī al-Dunyā—ʿIzz al-Dīn requested to look upon a sample of Ḥarrālī’s Qur’ān commentary. It’s not clear whether ʿIzz al-Dīn cast his eyes on a portion of Ḥarrālī’s *Miftāḥ*, a meta-discourse on *tafsīr*, or Ḥarrālī’s *tafīr* itself, but in either case he was manifestly displeased by what he read. According to the ‘ʿUnwān’s account, ʿIzz al-Dīn expressed his irritation at the lack of references to early exegetical authorities in Ḥarrālī’s *tafsīr*, rhetorically

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\(^{576}\) It should be noted that Pouzet mentions that Ḥarrālī passed through Damascus in 632/1234-5, a date that is repeated by Addas. However, neither the sources they reference nor any of those at my disposition corroborate this claim. The most credible timeline of Ḥarrālī’s final years is the one outlined in the previous section, which is extrapolated from Salāwī’s notice in the *Mil’*. Pouzet, *Maghrébins a Damas*, p. 179. Addas, *Soufre*, 230.


\(^{578}\) Abū Shāmah lists two possible dates for ʿIzz al-Dīn’s assumption of the *khīṭābah*: last ten days of Rabī’ II, 637 (=end of November, 1239) and (citing Ibn ʿAsākir) Wednesday, the 3\(^{rd}\) of Rabī’ II, 637 (2\(^{nd}\) of November, 1239). Abū Shāmah, *Rawdatayn*, vol. 5, p. 260.
demanding: “Where are the opinions of Mujāhid? Where are the opinions of Qatādah? Where are the opinions of Ibn ‘Abbās?” According to Ghubrīnī, ‘Izz al-Dīn sounded off at length in this vein (akthara al-qawl fī hādhā al-ma‘nā). In the end, he ordered that Ḥarrālī be expelled from Damascus: “He should be made to leave our country (yukhraj min bilādinā)”. In response, Ḥarrālī allegedly said: “[Rather] he leaves and the ‘servant of God’ stays (huwa yukhraj wa-yuqīm ‘abd Allāh)”. According to Ghubrīnī, who regards this whole episode as one of Ḥarrālī’s karāmāt, the events that unfolded ultimately led to the fulfilment of Ḥarrālī’s prediction. ‘Izz al-Dīn subsequently became embroiled in a dispute with the local ruler which culminated in the latter posing him the question: “is the country yours or is it ours? (al-bilād laka aw lanā)”. When ‘Izz al-Dīn admitted that “it is yours” (laka), the ruler ordered him to leave his country, which he promptly did.

Admittedly, Ghubrīnī’s account of these events is vague. And this has caused understandable confusion among modern scholars who have examined the ‘Unwān’s account.582


580 Ḥarrālī is employing the expression “servant of God” as a pious autonym, just as he did in his epistle to the Tarragona priest.

581 In his description of Ḥarrālī’s initial encounter with ‘Izz al-Dīn, Ghubrīnī refers to the latter as “imām al-diyyār al-miṣriyah”, which suggests the incident took place in Egypt, that is, after ‘Izz al-Dīn had already been exiled from Damascus. Similarly, another source of confusion is that, when describing the encounter between ‘Izz al-Dīn and the political authority who exiled him, Ghubrīnī designates the latter simply as “ṣāḥib al-diyyār al-miṣriyah”. Of course, it was to Egypt that ‘Izz al-Dīn was famously exiled, not from Egypt. I would speculate that the inaccuracies in Ghubrīnī’s account could be due, firstly, to the Ḥarrālī-‘Izz al-Dīn anecdote originally reaching him bereft of circumstantial detail (as mentioned above, Ghubrīnī appears to have been ignorant of Ḥarrālī’s passage through Damascus). Secondly, it is conceivable that Ghubrīnī—and most Maghribīs living around the turn of the 14th century—may have been more familiar with the second half of ‘Izz al-Dīn’s career in Cairo than they were with the latter’s Damascus days.

582 The error current in the secondary literature seems to have originated with Dermenghem who determines—on the basis of an understandable but demonstrably incorrect reading of the ‘Unwān’s account—that ‘Izz al-Dīn expelled Ḥarrālī from Cairo. To his credit, even though Nwyia was unaware of
However, the chronological and geographical details of Ḥarrālī’s final years, as detailed in the foregoing pages, tell us with a high degree of certainty that Ḥarrālī’s arrival in Damascus occurred around 637/1239-40—therefore also his encounter with ‘Izz al-Dīn occurred around that time. To reiterate, I have found no clear evidence that Ḥarrālī ever visited Damascus on an earlier occasion. As for the ‘Unwān’s account of the fate of ‘Izz al-Dīn—his run-in with an unnamed political figure and his subsequent exile from the territory ruled by that same political figure—this appears to align perfectly with the famous altercation in 638/1240 between ‘Izz al-Dīn and the Ayyūbid ruler of Damascus, al-Ṣāliḥ Ismā‘īl. After the latter struck an alliance with the Crusaders against the Ayyūbid ruler in Cairo, ceding significant fortresses and territories to the Franks in the bargain, ‘Izz al-Dīn publicly and courageously expressed his opposition to the policies of al-Ṣāliḥ.583 For this, he was duly imprisoned, albeit only briefly. Unfortunately we don’t know the exact date of ‘Izz al-Dīn’s imprisonment. We know, however, that soon after his

the sources that confirm Ḥarrālī’s sojourn in Damascus (primarily Ibn Rushayd’s Mil’ and, more indirectly, Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s Sabk), he intuitively arrives at the correct assumption that the encounter with ‘Izz al-Dīn occurred in Damascus. However, Nwyia equivocates as to which of the two characters got the better of the other. Other scholars, like Pouzet and Addas (and following them Knysh), labor under two main dubious assumptions. On the one hand, they accept that Ḥarrālī passed through Damascus, though they assume (for reasons that remain unclear) that this occurred in the year 632/1234-5. On the other hand, they retain Dermenghem’s original misreading of the ‘Unwān, i.e. that ‘Izz al-Dīn got the better of Ḥarrālī. Pouzet and Addas therefore assume that ‘Izz al-Dīn successfully brought about Ḥarrālī’s ejection from Damascus and that this event occurred several years before ‘Izz al-Dīn’s own move from Damascus to Cairo. Dermenghem, “Hirrālī”, p. 42. Nwyia, “Ḥarrālī”, pp.172-3. Addas, Soufre, pp. 229-30, 294. Pouzet, Maghrébins a Damas, p. 179. Knysh, Later Islamic Tradition, p. 304, 72f.

583 In Udfuwī’s account of the incident, ‘Izz al-Dīn merely declined to mention al-Ṣāliḥ’s name in supplications given from the pulpit during the Friday prayers. When later confronted (apparently in private) by al-Ṣāliḥ, ‘Izz al-Dīn refused to come to heel, citing al-Ṣāliḥ’s concession of Ṣafad and Ṣaqīf to the Franks. At that point al-Ṣāliḥ asked: “Is this country mine or yours?” (ḥādhā al-balad lī aw laka)—a phrase that corresponds perfectly enough to the one related in Ghubrīnī’s account. According to Udfuwī’s, ‘Izz al-Dīn thereupon left Damascus, apparently on his own accord and without having previously been imprisoned. When the governor of Karak invited ‘Izz al-Dīn to settle in his city, the latter told him: “your city is too minor for my knowledge” (baladuka qalīlatun ‘alā ‘ilmī). Udfuwī’s account goes on to chronicle ‘Izz al-Dīn’s exploits in Ayyūbid Cairo. Udfuwī, Badr, vol. 1, p. 481.
release, ‘Izz al-Dīn repaired to Egypt in the company of his steadfast ally, the renowned Mālikī jurist Ibn al-Ḥājib (d. 646/1248). Arriving in Cairo in the year 639/1241-2, ‘Izz al-Dīn assumed the post of qādī al-quḍāt on the day of ‘arafah, 9 Dhū al-Ḥijjah, 639 (= 10 June, 1242).  

It should go without saying that our objective here is not to prove that, in his contentious encounter with ‘Izz al-Dīn, Ḥarrālī had divine aid on his side. Rather, the point is to lay out the historical basis for why the encounter may have been perceived as miraculous in certain circles. In fact, the original circle of witnesses appears to have been a very restricted indeed. The ‘Unwān, it turns out, is the only original source of this anecdote and it is not until late in the 15th century that other biographers begin citing the incident on Ghubrīnī’s authority. Thus, what probably happened was that, in the first instance, a small number of Ḥarrālī’s disciples witnessed the altercation with ‘Izz al-Dīn—this much of the account, and even the preserved dialogue, is essentially believable, if possibly incomplete. Shortly after this heated encounter, these same witnesses were likely privy to the whole public drama of ‘Izz al-Dīn’s exit from Damascus. Within this same small, tightknit circle of disciples, ‘Izz al-Dīn’s exile was understandably construed as a vindication of Ḥarrālī, though there is no evidence to suggest that the wider Damascene public saw it in these terms. But it was these disciples who then later reported the hagiographic anecdote back to the wider community of students and admirers of Ḥarrālī in Bijāyah, where the story likely circulated until the time Ghubrīnī recorded it in the ‘Unwān.


585 Even the Damascus-based Dhahabī does not mention it in the notices he devotes to Ḥarrālī in several of his biographical works. It is actually the polemicist Sakhāwī (d. 1497) who is the first Mashriqi historian to cite the incident on the basis of the ‘Unwān. Other biographers of Ḥarrālī who mention the incident either explicitly cite Ghubrīnī, or if not, repeat the telltale details (in my view, inaccuracies) which appear in the ‘Unwān’s account.
As far as why ‘Izz al-Dīn was displeased, his reference to Qatādah et. al. suggest that on one level, Ḥarrālī’s tafsīr did not contain enough riwāyah for ‘Izz al-Dīn’s taste. But this is rather a superficial critique for someone as erudite as ‘Izz al-Dīn. Not that the question of referring to the views of the salaf is unimportant, but there is a wealth of more subtle conceptualizations in Ḥarrālī’s exegesis with which ‘Izz al-Dīn could have taken issue. Instead, he reportedly harped at length on a fairly jejune matter. His questions were largely rhetorical and sterile. My sense is that ‘Izz al-Dīn was originally intent on riffling through the exegetical text to quickly get the measure of Ḥarrālī as a scholar and perhaps also to reassure himself that there was little of intellectual substance that these migrant waves of Maghribī and Andalūsī scholars were bringing that he had not already seen himself. It’s not clear whether ‘Izz al-Dīn cast his eyes on a portion of Ḥarrālī’s tafīr itself, or the Miftāḥ, which is a meta-discourse on tafsīr, in either case both are dense reads and not amenable to quick skimming. Thus, on some level, I believe the altercation stemmed from personal and rather petty reasons, that is, from ‘Izz al-Dīn’s frustration of not being able to immediately or totally grasp the import of what Ḥarrālī had written. On another level, ‘Izz al-Dīn

The second account of Ḥarrālī’s sojourn in Damascus comes to us courtesy of Ibn Ṭawwāḥ
and is, in fact, one of the most tantalizing anecdotes in all of Ḥarrālī’s biography:

When [Ḥarrālī] got together with the foremost gnostic, the perceiver of higher realities, the realizer Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn al-‘Arabī al-Ḥātimī, [the latter] hosted him for three days, at the term of which Muḥyī al-Dīn said to him: either you settle here and I depart (immā an tuqīm hunā wa-nartāḥil) or you depart and I settle (wa-immā an tartāḥil wa-nuqīm), for two heretics should not gather in a single place (li-‘anna zindīqayn lā yajtami‘ān fī makān wāḥid). Thereafter shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan departed for Ḥamāh, and settled there, and died there.⁵⁸⁶

Ibn Ṭawwāḥ is not specific about this encounter taking place in Damascus, an imprecision which has contributed to misguided assumptions in the secondary literature.\(^{587}\) The weight of evidence strongly suggests that the encounter indeed took place in Damascus at the twilight of both men’s careers. Not the least of these is the fact that Ibn ‘Arabī definitively settles in Damascus in 620/1223 and remains there for the last 17 years of his life.\(^{588}\) For Ḥarrālī’s part, there is no evidence that he ever visited either Damascus or Ḥamāh except during the final months of his life.

Due to the scarceness of material pertaining to the relationship between Ḥarrālī and Ibn ‘Arabī, there is the temptation to maximize the historical significance of such rare accounts. However fascinating this anecdote, there are no definitive or sweeping conclusions that can be made on the basis of this one documented meeting between the two. On a basic level, the

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\(^{587}\) Khayyāṭī (Ḥarrālī’s Arabic editor) assumes that the encounter took place in Marrakesh, an error seemingly due to two main factors. The first is the more or less extenuating fact that Khayyāṭī was not apprised of the information contained in the Mill, where it is explicitly stated that Ḥarrālī sojourned in Damascus. The second factor has to do with sloppiness within the text of the Sabk itself. Immediately prior to the “zindiqayn” anecdote is Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s description of Ḥarrālī as a popular, young intellectual figure who for a time served as a kātib for sultan al-Manṣūr in the Almohad capital. The problem is that there is no break between the Marrakesh vignette and the Ibn ‘Arabī anecdote. The two appear conjoined in the text: “…[Ḥarrālī’s] presence was prized in the most cultured gatherings and when he got together with… Ibn ‘Arabī…(kāna ḥāluh yuṭraz bi-hi anfas al-majālis wa-lammā ijtama’a bi-… Ibn al-‘Arabī)”. Khayyāṭī was apparently working off a manuscript copy of the Sabk. But even in the printed edition, there is not even a comma separating the two elements of the biographical narrative. Originally, the continuity can likely be put down to the fact that for Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, as for many other biographers, linear chronology and narrative coherence were not always top methodological priorities. This, at any rate, is the main reason why Khayyāṭī assumes that the Ibn ‘Arabī anecdote is geographically tied to the city of Marrakesh, and that the two figures met each other as colleagues early in their careers. While, theoretically I would not discount the possibility that the two met in Marrakesh—especially given that Ibn ‘Arabī himself allegedly served the Almohads as a kātib as well as visited Marrakesh in 597/1200-01 (Addas, Soufre, p. 352)—I would firmly assert that the key geographical coordinate pertaining to the Sabk’s “zindiqayn” anecdote is that which is given in the immediately subsequent (and not antecedent) phrase, i.e. when Ibn Ṭawwāḥ states: “Thereafter shaykh Abū al-Hasan departed for Ḥamāh, and settled there, and died there (fa-irtaḥala al-shaykh Abū al-Hasan ilā Ḥamāh wa-sakanahā thumma māta bi-hā)”\(^{588}\). This is quite clearly the ensuing resolution of Ibn ‘Arabī’s binary proposition. See Kh. 2011, pp. 82-3.

\(^{588}\) Addas, Soufre, p. 358.
anecdote gives us the answer to the question raised by Addas in her biography of Ibn ‘Arabī of whether he specifically made contact with Ḥarrālī. Other questions remain unanswered however: Was it their first meeting? Did their paths conspire to not cross each other even though they shared teachers and travelled through many of the cities at roughly the same time period? As discussed previously, there were some exchanges between the two through the medium of poetry, but it is unknown if they encountered each other physically. This “zindīqayn” anecdote is the only account which brings the two together at the same place at the same time.

The other big question is what did Ibn ‘Arabī intend by his “zindīqayn” remark? The most likely explanation in my view is that Ibn ‘Arabī was alluding—in a manner at once satirical, playful, and yet still grave—to the threat or fact of persecution of both men at the hands of sharī‘ah-minded ulama. Ibn ‘Arabī had himself been involved in a contentious affair with ‘Izz al-Dīn. Overall, Addas believes that Ibn ‘Arabī was not unduly harassed by the ulama during his sojourn in Damascus—in fact, she explicitly contrasts Ibn ‘Arabī’s supposedly peaceful sojourn with Ḥarrālī’s persecution at the hands of ‘Izz al-Dīn. This “zindīqayn” anecdote, however, suggests that there may have been simmering tensions between Ibn ‘Arabī and the ulama of Damascus.

589 Reading the anecdote in this way brings to mind another reason why Khayyāṭī’s assumption—of the meeting taking place in Marrakesh—does not hold up. Given Addas’ analysis of the various stages of Ibn ‘Arabī’s life, it seems inconceivable that, in 597/1200-01 when Ibn ‘Arabī visits Marrakesh, he could have come under the suspicion by ulama or suffered any form of persecution during this still relatively early phase of his career. The same applies to Ḥarrālī. It would thus be completely out of context and anachronistic for Ibn ‘Arabī to react to the pressure of some inquisition, or to speak ironically of being a heretic (zindīq), or to contemplate the need to emigrate.


591 Addas, Soufre, pp. 229-30, 294.
On the basis of this anecdote we can also cautiously assume that, despite the age difference, Ibn ‘Arabī and Ḥarrālī viewed each other as peers and that they probably were in agreement about the broad outlines of Sufi doctrine. Finally, given that he had been established in Damascus for nearly twenty years up until that point, Ibn ‘Arabī’s raising the prospect of him moving to cede way for Ḥarrālī staying was obviously more of an extravagant display of hospitality than a realistic alternative.

**Hamāh: Final Resting Place**

Dhahabī tells us that when Ḥarrālī moved to Hamāh he was the guest of (kāna nāzilan ‘inda) the city’s qāḍī Ibn al-Bārizī.592 The Ibn al-Bārizī family, however, represents a long line of religious scholars in Hamāh and it is not clear from Dhahabī’s account if Ḥarrālī’s host was Shams al-Dīn Ibn al-Bārizī593 (580-669/1184-1270) or the latter’s son Najm al-Dīn Ibn al-Bārizī594 (608-683/1211-1284). Both occupied the post of qāḍī in Hamāh, though the precise period of their tenure is unknown. Najm al-Dīn, however, appears to have been more widely famed for his support of taṣawwuf. Little concrete is known about Ḥarrālī’s relationship with the

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Ibn al-Barizīs. Presumably he was offered some protection from whatever pressures he was exposed to in Damascus and which Ibn ‘Arabī was apparently alluding to in the aforementioned “zindīqayn” anecdote.

Interestingly, the details of Ḣarrālī’s final days in Ḥamāh were conveyed to Dhahabī by his teacher Sharaf al-Dīn Hibat Allāh Ibn al-Bārizī\(^{595}\) (645-737/1247-1338). Like his father and grandfather before him, Sharaf al-Dīn was an esteemed Shāfi‘ī jurist and occupied the post of qāḍī in Ḥamāh. And like his father, Sharaf al-Dīn was also an admirer of Sufi shaykhs (muḥibban li-al-fuqarā’ wa-al-ṣālihīn). Sharaf al-Dīn was also a prolific author in subjects revolving mostly around the sciences of the Qur’ān, ḥadīth, and fiqh.\(^{596}\) Notably, Sharaf al-Dīn incorporated Ḣarrālī’s Sufi homiletic on the Prophet al-Īmān al-tāmm as a separate chapter in his


\(^{596}\) Around thirty titles are attributed to Sharaf al-Dīn including, in the Qur’ānic sciences, Badiʿ al-Qurʾān, Mutashābah al-Qurʾān, al-Nāsikh wa-al-mansūkh, Sharḥ al-Shāṭibīyah (on Shāṭibī’s mnemotechniques poem), and two full-length Qurʾān commentaries: Rawḍāt jannāt al-muhībbin fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-mubīn, and al-Bustān fī tafsīr bādiʿ al-Qurʾān, both apparently lost. In ḥadīth science, in which he was considered as holding the rank of ḥāfidz, fiqḥ and and Islamic law, titles attributed to Sharaf al-Dīn include al-Wafāʾ fī ḥadīth al-Muṣtafasā, Gharīb al-ḥadīth, Mukhtaṣar Jāmiʿ al-ʿuṣūl fī aḥādīth al-Rasūl, which is an abridgement of the work of Ibn al-Athīr al-Jazrī (544-606), and an unnamed commentary on al-Māwardi’s (d. 1058) al-Hāwī (on Shāfī‘ī fiqḥ). In taṣawwuf, Sharaf al-Dīn authored al-Dirāyah li-aḥkām al-Riʿāyah, a commentary on Muḥāsibī’s famous al-Riʿāyah li-huquq Allāh. Sharaf al-Dīn donated the proceeds of his books to a waqf (waqqafa kutubah), with the total amount reportedly equaling around one hundred thousand dirhams. Several of Sharaf al-Dīn Ibn al-Bārizī’s works have been edited.
work *Tawthiq ‘urá al-ímân*.

This suggests the Bārizīs valued and helped conserved Ḥarrālī’s writings.

Regarding Ḥarrālī’s final days in Ḥamāh, Dhahabī does relate a handful of anecdotes of marginal importance. Dhahabī mentions, for example, that Ḥarrālī’s superlatively gentle disposition was the stuff of parables. Another anecdote related by Dhahabī is that Ḥarrālī entered into yet another marriage in Ḥamāh, apparently by way of doing a good turn (*mujāmalatan*). However, it would seem Ḥarrālī’s bad luck with women continued, for this new wife was reportedly just as abusive towards him as had been Karīmah. All the while, witnesses say, Ḥarrālī would merely smile and pray for her (*yad’ū la-hā*).

A more heartening marital anecdote related by Ghubrīnī is that while Ḥarrālī was on his deathbed, his wife asked him: “What shall I do? I have no patience.” Ḥarrālī said to her: “God will give you patience (*yuṣabbirki Allāh*).” According to the testimony of those who were present, she did not exhibit excessive sorrow (*jaza*’) at his death. This anecdote probably involves the “favorite” wife which, as Ghubrīnī indicates, Ḥarrālī had brought with him to the Levant.

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597 Ḥarrālī’s *al-Ímān* and Ibn al-Bārizī’s *Tawthīq* are discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

598 The Ibn al-Bārizī family eventually moved from Ḥamāh to Damascus. Some of the manuscripts of Ḥarrālī’s works appear to have been recopied in the same Damascene madrassas where Sharaf al-Dīn Ibn al-Bārizī was active, and at around the same time when the Ibn al-Bārizīs are said to have moved.

599 *kāna min aḥlam al-nās, bi-ḥaythu yuḍrab bi-hi al-mathal.*

600 The qualifier *mujāmalatan* appears in Dermenghem’s article and is translated as “pour faire une bonne action”. Dermenghem cites Ḥarrālī’s notice in Maqqārī’s *Naḥ ḥ al-šīb*, but the word does not appear in the edition at my disposition. Dermenghem, *Coufī*, p. 51 (= *Vies*, p. 287).

601 Reading the relevant passage in the ‘Unwān somewhat differently, Dermenghem deems that the wife that used to abuse Ḥarrālī (Karīmah from Bijāyah) is the same one who is at his deathbed. In Dermenghem’s loose translation of the passage she writes: “Sa femme s’écria alors: —Que deviendrai’je? Moi, je n’ai pas de patience. —Dieu t’en donnera. Et en effet, elle se montra cette fois à la hauteur des
The ‘Unwān actually gives a long and touching account of the final days and hours of Ḥarrālī’s life. In what follows I give the account as translated by Dermenghem (with some minor edits of my own):

Un jour, il dit à ses amis (aṣḥābihi): “Le 12 Sha'bān, je compte vous quitter.” Mais nul ne le vit faire des préparatifs de voyage. Cependant, il souffrait de dysentrie (iṣhāl). Il s’affaiblissait de jour en jour à vue d’œil, mais ne cessait pas de reciter ses awrad. Le soir du [12] Sha'bān 638 (25 Feb. 1241) il convoqua ses meilleurs compagnons, leur demanda de rester avec lui toute la nuit, d’allumer des cierges (sham’) et de reciter le Coran. Il but un peu d’eau du Zemzem et, le matin venu, il leur dit:

--- Il faut maintenant chercher un linceul (kafan = shroud) et creuser une tombe à tel endroit. Lorsque le mu‘adhˈdhin fera l’appel pour la prière de l’après-midi (al-ʿaṣr), je mourrai…

L’esprit du mourant qui, comme Socrate, avait tenu à passer sa dernière nuit avec ses disciples, avait déjà dépassé les frontiers de ce monde.

--- Je vois, dit-il à sa femme, Salmān al-Fārisī, Abū Hurayrah et d’autres Compagnons du Prophète qui viennent me chercher (jā’ū li-ya’khudhūnī ma’ahum).

Il dit le nom de tous ses compagnons et prononça une invocation en leur faveur. Il recommanda de n’annoncer sa mort qu’au moment où son corps serait sur les planches funéraires (alwāḥ). Son brancard ne devait être porté que par des fuqarā’.

Quand le ʿaṣr approcha, il demanda:

--- Est-ce l’heure (hal ḥāna al-ʿwaqt)?

Déjà le muʿadhʿ dhin lançait l’appel à la prière. A la fin du ādhān, al-Ḥarrālī mourut.603

There is a minor amount of disagreement in the sources on the date of Ḥarrālī’s death. Probably the most authoritative date is that recorded on the authority of Salāwī in the Mil’, 12 Sha'bān, 638 (=Tuesday, 26th Feb, 1241).604 This date also accords with that given by Mundhirī, who is technically the earliest biographer of Ḥarrālī.605 Mundhirī is also the only one to give a
birth date for Ḥarrālī: Dhū al-Ḥijjah, 582 (=Feb/Mar, 1187), giving us the plausibility that he died at around his 55th birthday. For his part, Ghubrînî actually gives two different dates: 637 which he states on the authority of Ibn Abbâr’s Takmilah, and 12 Sha‘bân, 638 whose source is almost certainly Salâwî.⁶⁰⁶ This same date is also given by Ibn Ṭawwâḥ, whose source is probably also Salâwî, since the latter is cited on several occasions elsewhere.⁶⁰⁷ Almost all later biographers give either the year 637 or 638.

As far as I know, there is no clear evidence indicating the existence of a tomb recognized as that of Abû al-Ḥasan al-Ḥarrâlî, neither in the present day nor at any point in the past. At the end of an ascription statement in a treatise by Ḥarrâlî titled Futyâ ṣalāḥ al-ʿamal (BNF Arabe 1398) it is written nawwara [Allahu] ḍarîḥah. But this could be simply a cordiality. No other evidence in historical sources suggests that it was venerated site or a place of pilgrimage. In Gaulmier’s 1931 article Pèlerinages Populaires à Hama, there are cases of semi-anonymous or ambiguous mazārāt that tenuously hold out the possibility that they could be Ḥarrâlî’s (although even then, there is no guarantee that they still stand today). There is that of al-Mghilî, for instance, a figure which local tradition believes hailed from Mghîlah, a tiny village 50km south east of Fez.⁶⁰⁸ Another possibility is the tomb attributed to Ghazâlî—almost certainly a fictitious claim—but it would not be the first time that there was an orthographic confusion between the names of

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⁶⁰⁷ Ibn Ṭawwâḥ, Sabk, p. 85.

⁶⁰⁸ “Mughlah” can also mean “stomach cramp” suffered especially by sheep, cattle, and horses; the visitation of this particular saint’s tomb is said to cure such ailments. Fīrūzābâdî supports both etymological derivations. Gaulmier, Pèlerinages, p. 142. Fīrūzābâdî, Qâmûs, p. 1058, [m gh l].
Ghazālī and Ḥarrālī. Finally there is the tomb ascribed to an anonymous member of the Bārizī family, located in the Bāṣūrah quarter of Ḥamāh. Given that Ḥarrālī was the guest of the Bārizīs and that the account of his death suggests he was buried very close to where he died, his remains may be located not far from this site.

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CHAPTER NINE: ḤARRĀLI’S CORPUS AND ITS RECEPTION IN THE LATER TRADITION
**Miftāḥ al-bāb al-muqfal li fahm al-Qur’ān al-munzal**

“The key to the locked door for understanding the revealed Qur’ān” is Ḥarrālī’s most famous work. The treatise is an ambitious prolegomenon to reading and understanding Qur’ānic scripture. It presupposes Ḥarrālī’s entropic theory of human knowledge and is meant to serve as a corrective intervention in what he sees as a steady decline in scriptural literacy in the centuries since the Qur’ān’s revelation. Ḥarrālī’s *Miftāḥ* may be seen as an application of the uṣūlī spirit to the field of *tafsīr*. Ḥarrālī’s biographers are fond of quoting and paraphrasing a particular phrase from the introduction of the *Miftāḥ*, namely, the reference to “axioms which are to Qur’ān-comprehension what uṣūl al-fiqh are to aḥkām-comprehension (tanzilu fī fahm al-qur’ān manzilat uṣūl al-fiqh fi tafahhum al-aḥkām)”.611 While in the *Miftāḥ* this phrase originally describes the contents of the teaching sessions of Qurṭubī (Ḥarrālī’s *tafsīr* teacher in Madīnah), biographers like Ghubrīnī tend to turn it, justifiably so, into a description of Ḥarrālī’s work itself.612


I benefited greatly [in the writing of the *Naẓm*] from a *tafsīr* that takes a totalizing approach (*tafsīr ‘alá wajh kullī*) belonging to the godly imām (*al-imām al-rabbānī*)…al-Ḥarrālī…which he named *Miftāḥ*…and al-‘*Urwah*…and *al-Tawshiyah wa-al-Tawfiyah*. I have cited the better part of the latter

611 Kh. 1997, p. 28.
612 Ghubrīnī, *‘Unwān*, p. 144.
work in the contents of this book of mine [the *Naẓm*]. I have referenced back to [Ḥarrālī’s work] on appropriate occasions.\(^{613}\)

**Mss. of Tri. I:**

A) BNF 1398\(^{614}\), fols. 122a-133a.

B) Parliamentary Library of Iran (Kitābkhāneh Majlis Shūrá), collection nr. 27842, comprising Ḥarrālī’s Tri. I (fols. 1-10), II, III, and Sharḥ asmā’ Allāh al-ḥusnā. Copied in 696 at al-Madrasah al-‘Umarīyah in Damascus by Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf ibn Abī al-Faraḥ al-‘Asqalānī; read and studied at other locations including al-khānaqāh al-Samisāṭīyah in Damascus.

C) Maktabat Muḥafaẓat al-Iskandarīyah (Egypt) nr. 2118 dāl; recopied in Makkah in 847/1443; a deed of sale statement apparently reads: *qāmahu ‘alá shaykhin ‘alá thalāthat dirham.*\(^{615}\)

D) al-Maktabah al-‘Āmmah bi-al-Ribāṭ, collection nr. 131 kāf, comprising Ḥarrālī’s Tri. I, II, and III (fols. 1-82), as well as the Ghazālī’s Risālat al-‘il al-ladunī (misattributed to Ḥarrālī).\(^{616}\)

E) al-Maktabah al-Qāsimīyah, 7/78. Copied circa 16\(^{th}/10\(^{th}\) century.\(^{617}\)

**Mss. of Tri II:**

A) BNF 1398, fols. 146a-175b.

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\(^{613}\) Cited in Kh. 1997, p. 144.

\(^{614}\) The BNF 1398 collection is written in a beautiful and clear Mashriqī hand, very few mistakes, with vocalization of certain words or passages that might otherwise be confusing.

\(^{615}\) Cited in Kh. 1997, p. 12.


\(^{617}\) *Fahrasat Makhṭūṭāt al-Maktabah al-Qāsimīyah*, pp. 402-3.
B) Parliamentary Library of Iran (Kitābkhāneh Majlis Shūrá), collection nr. 27842 (fols. 12a-34b).

C) Escorial Madrid nr. 1440; the colophon states that it recopied by Musá ibn ‘Alī ibn Shāmah at al-madrasah al-Ṣāḥibiyah\(^{618}\), on 28 Rajab 637 (= 23 Feb. 1240).\(^{619}\)

D) al-Maktabah al-‘Āmmah bi-al-Ribāt, collection nr. 131 kāf.\(^{620}\)

Mss. of Tri. III:

A) BNF 1398, fols. 134a-145b.

B) Parliamentary Library of Iran (Kitābkhāneh Majlis Shūrá), collection nr. 27842, fols. 34a-44b.

C) al-Maktabah al-‘Āmmah bi-al-Ribāt, collection nr. 131 kāf.\(^{621}\)

D) al-Maktabah al-Qāsimiyah, 7/70. Copied circa 16\(^{th}/10^{th}\) century.\(^{622}\)

Editions:


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\(^{618}\) Presumably the one in the Ṣāliḥiyah quarter of Damascus, built between 1233-1245 by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn’s sister Rābī’ah Khatūn, who endowed the institution through a Ḥanbalī waqf. Miura, *The Ṣāliḥiyya*, p. 172.


Studies:


C) In the Arab world, a handful of masters theses and dissertations have appeared which deal with Ḥarrālī’s Qurʾān hermeneutics, including his Miftāḥ. In Turkey, a thesis was by Faruk Salman on Ḥarrālī’s biography and his Miftāḥ.

Tafsīr

No separate copies of Ḥarrālī’s untitled, and in all likelihood unfinished, Tafsīr appear extant. The considerable quantity that survives is thanks to Biqāʿī extensively quoting from it in his Naẓm. After mentioning that he drew heavily on Ḥarrālī’s Miftāḥ, Biqāʿī writes:

Then, after I had arrived at [the commentary of] sūrat al-Anfāl, I came into possession of a portion (juzʿan) of [Ḥarrālī’s] tafsīr—from the beginning [of the Qurʾān] up until Truly God chose (SQ 3:33)—and I found it to be nonpareil. I have quoted from it on [the subject of] concordance (munāsabāt). I have quoted from it [passages] which have pleased me, and I have attributed these to [Ḥarrālī]. May God assist [me] in reading the rest of [Ḥarrālī’s tafsīr].

623 See for example:
http://thesis.mandumah.com/Record/166223
http://thesis.mandumah.com/Record/197294
http://thesis.mandumah.com/Record/101291

624 Faruk Salman, Harāllī, Marmara University, 1996.

625 Khayyāṭī notes that, in fact, Biqāʿī quotes Ḥarrālī’s tafsīr up until 3:62. See Kh. 1997, p. 144, 4f.

626 Cited in Kh. 1997, p. 144.
The copy of Ḥarrālī’s *Tafsīr* that Biqā’ī came into possession of was obviously incomplete. There are various contradicting reports in the biographical literature as to whether Ḥarrālī’s ever completed his *Tafsīr*. By citing the *tafsīr* without commenting on its incomplete status, some of the earliest biographers like Ghubrīnī and Dhahabī seem to imply that Ḥarrālī had indeed completed the work. While Dhahabī probably did not have had access to a copy of the *tafsīr*, Ghubrīnī probably did as he is more elaborate in his description:

As for the science of *tafsīr*, [Ḥarrālī] used to quote the āyahs consecutively, arranging them in magnificent arrangements (*nasqan baḍī’an*), and commenting on them in a manner that had no precedent. Ḥarrālī authored a *tafsīr* on [the Qurʾān] in which he adopted an elegant, accurate style (*salaka fīhī sabīl al-tahrīr*), and meditated on [the Qurʾān] expression by expression (*laẓatan lafzah*) and letter by letter (*ḥarfan ḥarfan*).627

Many later biographers, however, state that Ḥarrālī’s *Tafsīr* was never finished beyond roughly the first third of *sūrat Āl ‘Imrān*. For instance, Qarafī (d. 1600) claims to have seen a manuscript, copied around 700/1300, which runs until 3:37.628

To my knowledge, the one scholar in the Euro-American academy who has referred to Ḥarrālī’s *tafsīr* is Walid Saleh. In the introduction to his critical edition of Biqā’ī’s “Bible Treatise” (*al-Aqwāl al-qawīmah fī ḥukm al-naql ‘an al-kutub al-qadīmah*), Saleh dedicates a page or so to the influence of Ḥarrālī.629 Apparently the result of a methodological choice, Saleh does not get into the content of Ḥarrālī’s edited works nor offer any suggestion as to how and why Biqā’ī came under his influence. At one point, Saleh references a specific page in the introduction of Khayyāṭī’s 1997 edition (of Ḥarrālī’s *Miftāḥ* and partially recovered *tafsīr*). Curiously, however, the reader is not treated to even a quantitative approximation of what’s in

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627 Ghubrīnī, *‘Unwān*, p. 145.

628 Qarāfī, *Tawshīḥ*, p. 149.

the edition and what portion of it was used by Biqā‘ī. If Saleh had the edition in hand, could he have not at least noted that it contains over five hundred pages worth of Ḥarrālī’s *tafsīr* extracted by Khayyāṭī extracted from Biqā‘ī’s *Naẓm*, or that extensive passages of Ḥarrālī’s *Miftāḥ* are also reproduced in the *Naẓm*?

Saleh’s assessment of Ḥarrālī’s exegetical legacy is based solely on a limited selection of biographical notices. But even within this narrow scope, Saleh makes some questionable choices, starting with his uncritical adoption of Dhahabī and Ibn Taymīyah’s categorization of Ḥarrālī as a “philosophizing mystic”. The judgement of these medieval figures—with well-known polemical proclivities—was apparently enough for Saleh to confidently classify Ḥarrālī as an “unorthodox” exegete.

It’s possible, though not obvious from the text, that Saleh’s use of the label “unorthodox” was intended not as a judgment of the content of the Ḥarrālī’s *tafsīr* but rather in reference to the *perception* of Ḥarrālī’s *tafsīr* from within the mainstream tradition. This may be partly true, but it remains in any case a conjectural proposition, because all of the negative reviews of Ḥarrālī’s *tafsīr* originate from biographical entries written by authors whose firsthand knowledge of the *tafsīr* is improbable. And Saleh gives us no good reason why we should privilege the judgement of these biographers, notably Dhahabī and ‘Asqalānī, over those of biographers who claim, and in some cases can be convincingly shown, to have actually read Ḥarrālī’s *tafsīr* and even, in the case of the biographer Ghubarīnī, to have studied directly under students of Ḥarrālī.

To his credit, Saleh does cite Ghubarīnī’s (d. 1315) panegyric biography of Ḥarrālī. However, he seems to think that it was written as an apologetic response to the more critical biographies of Dhahabī (d. 1348) and other later Mashriqī historians, which is chronologically absurd. Saleh also appears to intimate that Ghubarīnī’s positive assessment of Ḥarrālī owes chiefly to the two
being compatriots from the Maghrib, which suggests that he did not analyze the ‘Umwān deeply enough to realize that Ghubrīnī had studied under old Bijāyan students of Ḥarrālī.

Another important lacuna in Saleh’s analysis, even within its strictly biographical parameters, is his failure to cite the views of Munāwī (d. 1621), a scholar who closely studied Biqā’ī’s tafsīr (also referred to as Munāsabāt) and was one of the earliest critics to note Biqā’ī’s indebtedness to Ḥarrālī:

[Ḥarrālī] composed a commentary [on the Qur’ān] which he packed with his essential doctrine (haqā’iqī), the intricate inferences of his thought (daqāʿiq fikrihi), and the products of his intellectual genius (natāʿīj qariḥatihi). On the concordance (munāsabāt) of āyāt and suwar, he shed light in [his tafsīr] on [aspects] which dazzle the mind (mā yubhir al-ʿuqūl), and which confound [even] the luminaries (taḥārū fīhī al-fuhūl). Ḥarrālī represents the intellectual capital (raʿīs māl) of Biqāʾī, without whom [the latter] would have neither “come nor gone” (wa-lāwlaḥ mā rāḥa wa-lā jāʾ). However, [Ḥarrālī’s tafsīr] was never completed, such that at the point where it cuts off, thereat [the best of] Biqāʾī’s Munāsabāt also cuts off (min haythu waqafa, waqafa hāl al-Biqāʾī fī Munāsabātihi). But obviously, one shouldn’t analyze too deeply or judge too harshly Saleh’s relatively brief discussion of Ḥarrālī in the introcution to his critical edition of Biqāʾī al-Aqwāl al-qawīmah. The subject of Ḥarāllī is in some ways peripheral since, in this particular treatise, he is not directly referenced by Biqāʾī. Yet given that Saleh’s work is, as far as I am aware, the first and the only one in the Euro-American academy to mention the influence of Ḥarrālī’s Qurʾān hermeneutics on Biqāʾī’s Nazm, and given the importance of this link in terms of appraising Ḥarrālī’s legacy, it was imperative to address the misconceptions and research lacunas which afflict Saleh’s brief comments on this specific subject.

630 Munāwī, Kawākib, vol. 1, p. 465. Another early reviewer of Biqāʾī’s Nazm who cites Biqāʾī’s indebtedness to Ḥarrālī (and may have done so independently from Munāwī’s assessment) is Almgard Bābā al-Timbuktī (d. 1627) who lauds Ḥarrālī’s tafsīr as “ḥasan” and describes it as the basis on which Biqāʾī composed his Munāsabāt (‘alayhi nasaja al-Bijāʾī Munāsabātihi). Bābā, Nayl, p. 320; Kifāyat, vol. 1, p. 341. Bābā’s observations appear to be repeated in Maqqārī, Naḥf al-ṭib, vol. 2, p. 189.
Biqā’ī remains the most renowned figure that we know to have been directly inspired by the writings of Ḥarrālī. Establishing the nature and the extent of this influence constitutes probably one of the most urgent tasks from the point of view understanding Ḥarrālī’s own legacy. It also promises to be a rewarding endeavor for scholars engaged in tafsīr studies, particularly those interested in early approaches to the idea of Qur’ān concordance and the internal coherence of sūrāhs as discrete literary units.

Publications:

A) Turāth Abī al-Ḥasan al-Ḥarrālī al-Murrākushī fī al-tafsīr, ed. Khayyāṭī (al-Dār al-Bayḍā’, 1997). Various passages and fragments of Ḥarrālī’s tafsīr, which Khayyāṭī extracted from Biqā’ī’s Naẓm al-durar, can be found pp. 144-594. Khayyāṭī states that he used both the printed edition of the Naẓm (Hyderabad, 1976) as well as a manuscript copy (Rabat, al-Maktabah al-Ḥasanīyah, nr. 2695) because he found that numerous passages from the latter do not appear in the former. Ḥarrālī’s tafsīr is presented in the order that it occurs in the Naẓm which is a running commentary on the Qur’ān. One rather irritating shortcoming of Khayyāṭī’s edition is that quotations from the Qur’ānic text are not referenced, although they are highlighted in bold (Qur’anic text is referenced in Khayyāṭī’s edition of the Miftāḥ trilogy).

Studies:


**Notable References:** Ḥarrālī’s etymological definitions—which have theological and ethical implications and which feature both in his *tafsīr* and in his *Miftāḥ*—are quoted on numerous occasions throughout Munāwī’s *Fayḍ al-qadīr* (a commentary on Suyūṭī’s ḥadīth compilation *al-Jāmi’ al-saghīr*) and his *al-Tawqīf ‘alá mūhimma atl-ta’ārīf*.

**Saʿd al-Wāʾī wa-uns al-qārī fī dhikr mā nazala fī al-ḥikmah min al-āyī**

*Saʿd al-Wāʾī*, or, “The happiness of the conscientious and the delight of the reader in citing the verses which have descended on the subject of wisdom” has a somewhat disproportionately long title for what is a very short booklet (*daftar*) of barely 10 folios. The main objective of *Saʿd al-wāʾī* is to comment on the verses of the Qurʾān which mention the term ḥikmah. Ḥarrālī makes a number of interesting arguments in this treatise. He begins by defining the wisdom of the intellect (*al-ḥikmah al-aqlīyah*) as the understanding of the causal relationships (*tasbīb*) between things in the physical world, that is, on the plane of reality perceived by the senses. In this regard, the intellect is the distinguishing marker of our humanity (*mazīyāt al-insānīyah*) over against the rest of the animal kingdom. Through the light of reason (*nūr al-aql*), God reveals to human beings the structure of the physical universe. It was the monotheist sages (*al-ḥukmā’ al-ḥunafāʾ*), by which Ḥarrālī means the ancient Greek thinkers, who made full use of the intellect and perfected the wisdom of the intellect. Ḥarrālī even goes so far as to say that the intellect is one of God’s Messengers (*rasūlun min rusulihi*). One can detect here, perhaps,
echo of the autodidactic notions articulated by Ḥarrālī’s compatriot, Ibn Ṭufayl (d. 581/1185) in his philosophical novel Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān. More generally, one can sense the intellectual energy and philosophical rigor of late 13th century Almohad environment in which Ḥarrālī was raised.

Ḥarrālī then goes on to discuss the alternative path charted by sages of the Abrahamic faiths (al-ḥukamā’ al-millīyīn), who fused the wisdom of the intellect with faith (īmān) and were thus able to surpass the achievements of the Greeks by delving deeper into the science of the soul. Along the way, Ḥarrālī takes the opportunity to insert a couple of sayings attributed to Jesus, including the saying: “None shall attain the celestial kingdom but those who are born twice (lan yalaj al-malakūt man lam yūlad marratayn)”. The first birth in Ḥarrālī’s view is the acquisition of the wisdom of the intellect, which was the crowning achievement of the ancient Greeks. But the second birth is the plunge into the celestial realm, which lies beyond the terminal endpoint of the rational intellect. From that point, progress is dependent not on ratiocination but on the depth and sincerity of one’s faith—and above all on divine grace.

For Ḥarrālī, a pure rationalism unsupported by faith is a double-edged sword. On occasion it may hit the mark, but it may also miss it or fall short. Conversely, when the wisdom of the intellect is pressed into the service of faith, it can potentially facilitate and even accelerate spiritual progress. In other words, the hard-earned epistemological fruits of ascetic practice—which may take years of arduous spiritual discipline to achieve—can sometimes be had through the relatively effortless operations of the intellect. Thus, when deployed in the spiritual domain, the wisdom of the intellect can facilitate the attainment of that which is lofty by means of that which is easy. Ḥarrālī’s statement about the intellect being one of God’s messengers should not be taken to mean that he was an advocate of pure rationalism, or that the intellect should
glorified for its own sake. Ḥarrālī rather is sacralizing reason as an epistemological source and co-opting it into a religious system of thought.

**Manuscripts:**

A) BNF 1398, fols. 188a–196b.

**Studies:**

A) Nwyia, Ḥarrālī, pp. 194-5.

B) Kh. 2011, pp. 251-76.

**Risālah fī ‘ilm al-ma‘qūlāt**

This work may correspond to the title al-Ma‘qūlāt al-‘uwal, attributed to Ḥarrālī in the ‘Unwān. Ghubrīnī claims that he had laid eyes on various works by Ḥarrālī on the intellectual speculations of the philosophers (ma‘qūlāt al-ḥukamā’) and the science of logic (‘ilm al-manṭiq). Dhahabī (Siyar) also states that Ḥarrālī composed works on logic.

**Manuscripts:**

A) British Library ARUN OR 10/6 (copied 712/1312).

**al-Lamḥah fī ma‘rifat al-ḥurūf**

The full title of this treatise is al-Lamḥah fī ma‘rifat al-ḥurūf bi-muqtaḍā ma‘ānīhā wa-‘dādihā wa-rutab muthulihā fī al-kashf, which Nwyia translates as Aperçu sur la connaissance gnostique des lettres selon les données de leurs signification, de leurs chiffres et de la hiérarchie de leurs symbols dans le dévoilement. The treatise also appears under the title Shams maṭālī ‘al-qlūb wa-badr ṭawālī’ al-ghuyūb.
On the science of letters, Ḥarrālī once confided to a disciple that he received a *fath* in the meaning of all of the letters of the Arabic alphabet—except for the *alif*—in three days. Thereafter he received a *fath* into the meaning of the letter *alif* in seven days. Ḥarrālī is regarded by many as one of the greatest Muslim authorities on the science of letters (*ʿilm al-ḥurūf*). In Būnī’s (d. 622/1225) treatise *Shams al-maʿārif al-kubrā*, perhaps the most famous treatise on the subject, Ḥarrālī is acknowledged as a teacher in the most reverent terms. Specifically cited in the *Shams al-maʿārif* is Ḥarrālī’s *al-Lamḥah*, the treatise presently under consideration. In his dissertation analyzing the *Shams al-maʿārif* and its later reception, Francis does discuss the figures and the *silsilahs* mentioned at the end of the treatise.


632 Ḥarrālī is mentioned in a final section of the *Shams* dedicated to Būnī’s teachers (*Shams*, vol. 4, p. 532). Ḥarrālī does not appear to be mentioned in the main body of the treatise. All editions of the *Shams* apparently transcribe Ḥarrālī’s name as al-Ḥarrānī, but the rest of the transcribed name corresponds accurately enough to that of Ḥarrālī. It is even more accurate in many of the manuscripts of the *Shams*. Additionally, the *Shams* correctly identifies the place of Ḥarrālī’s death as Ḥamāh. The year of death, however, is given as 538 rather than 638. Ḥarrālī may also be mentioned a few lines earlier in the same section of the *Shams* (vol. 4, p. 531) where we find an extensive and opulent eulogistic introduction of a figure transcribed, in the printed edition, as Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī. However, a closer look in several of the manuscripts of the *Shams* (BNF Arabe 2651, fol. 254a; BNF 2653, fols. 598b-599a; BNF Arabe 2654, fols. 344b-345a; BNF Arabe 2655, fol. 507a) reveals a different transcription (Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥussein ibn Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad al-Tujībī) which closely matches that of Ḥarrālī. Some of these copies also give the correct year of Ḥarrālī’s death. Therefore, until further evidence emerges, we should assume that this reference to “Ghazālī” is in reality a reference to Ḥarrālī. Ḥarrālī is also briefly mentioned in Būnī’s *Mafāṭīḥ asrār al-ḥurūf* (BNF Arabe 2669, 134 fols., fol. 28b). That Ḥarrālī was the shaykh of Būnī is also mentioned in Munāwī’s (d. 1621) *al-Kawākiḥ al-durrīyah* (in Ḥarrālī’s notice, vol. 1 p. 469), though the source of this very tersely stated claim may well just be the text of the *Shams*. It’s also worth mentioning that in Ḥarrālī’s notice in *Masālik al-abṣār* (vol. 8, pp. 226-8, nr. 94), the author Ibn Faḍl Allāh (d. 1363) reports an anecdote by the biographer Ṣafadī (d. 1363) who states: “I got together with someone who possesses intuition into the science of letters…and he told me that Ḥarrālī does not understand a thing in this science and that the true savant in this art is al-Būnī”.

633 The *Shams al-maʿārif* refers to two separate titles by Ḥarrālī: *al-Lamʿah* and *Shams maṭālīʿ al-qulūb*, both of which I believe refer to one and the same work, namely the *al-Lamḥah* which is also known by its variant title *Shams maṭālīʿ al-qulūb wa-badr ṭawālīʿ al-ghuyūb*. 
Unfortunately, however, as he accepts the printed edition’s erroneous transcription of the *nisbah*, which he renders as al-Ḥūrānī, he misses the opportunity to properly identify Ḥarrālī and explore his potential connections with Būnī and with the text of the *Shams al-maʿārif*.\(^{634}\)

Francis’ research does tell us, however, that the longer recensions of the *Shams al-maʿārif* are almost certainly not the work of Būnī alone but rather that later, anonymous writers added to it.\(^{635}\) Since Būnī is believed to have spent the latter part of his life in Cairo and was buried in the Qarāfah in 622/1225, it is possible that he and Ḥarrālī met each other. Less likely is that Būnī was a student of Ḥarrālī. However, Ḥarrālī was probably the teacher of one or more of those anonymous writers who added to the *Shams al-maʿārif*. One possible candidate would be Abū Zakarīyā’ Ibn Maḥjūbah al-Saṭīfī, a mystically-inclined disciple who was an active author and who is said to have lived in Egypt for a long period. But even some Bijāyah-based students should be considered, most notably the philosophical, and mystically-minded ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq Ibn Rabī’ and Abū al-Ḥasan “Ibn Asāṭīr” al-Milyānī.

The Ḥarrālī pupil who contributed to the *Shams al-maʿārif*, whoever it may have been, was certainly more interested than his master in promulgating the operative aspects of the science of letters. Whereas the *Shams al-maʿārif* lays out in the detailed manner of a scientific manual the practical use of squares and talismans, Ḥarrālī’s *al-Lamḥah fī maʿrifat al-ḥurūf* addresses the practical application of letters much less than it does their theoretical, cosmological significance.

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\(^{634}\) The erroneous year of Ḥarrālī’s death—538 in the printed edition of the *Shams*, but 638 in some manuscript copies—further complicates Francis’ attempt to work out the biography of Būnī. Francis, *Islamic symbols*, diss. 2005, p. 102.

\(^{635}\) “Based on the manuscript evidence, then, it seems reasonable to conclude that al-Būnī wrote some version of the *Shams al-maʿārif* and that this text was progressively added to over the years and centuries. It may well be that the distinction between the short, medium, and long recensions emerged to reflect different stages of the text’s development, recognized by Arabic bibliographers as different versions of the same text.” Francis, *Islamic symbols*, diss. 2005, p. 109.
Even then, he maintains a highly abstract approach—unlike the treatises of Būnī, there are no magic squares, formulas, or illustrations of any kind in the works of Ḥarrālī on the subject.

*Kitāb al-Lamḥah* represents the lengthiest (approx. 100 folios) and most complex articulation by Ḥarrālī on ‘ilm al-ḥurūf. There appear to be only a handful of extant copies of the treatise, but the marginalia of the surviving manuscripts suggest that the treatise had been in circulation for centuries.⁶³⁶

**Manuscripts:**

A) BNF Paris, Arabe 1398, fols. 12a-109b; the BNF collection was owned by al-Biqāʿī, meaning that the latter presumably studied the work or was generally aware of its contents; the title page states that it was written from the author’s direct dictation (*imlāʾ*) adding a prayer: “May God make Islam enjoy his long life”. But this surely applies to the original, as this copy was recopied in 721/1321 by Lajīn[?] al-Makramānī, at Khānaqāh Saʿīd al-suʿādāʾ in Cairo.

B) Istanbul, Suleymaniye, Faith, 3434.⁶³⁷ The opening lines of this copy (fol. 1b) state that the text is based on lectures given by Ḥarrālī over a period of months in 629/1231-1232 at the Jāmiʿ al-ʿAtīq in Cairo (Miṣr). It is also stated that the text is the product of the “dictation of [Ḥarrālī’s] speech and his editing of it [i.e. the transcript] at the time of dictation”. This copy may have been the original text from which BNF 1398 was copied.

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⁶³⁶ The treatise is part of the Paris collection. The title page of the BNF 1398 copy states that it was written from the author’s direct dictation (*imlāʾ*) adding a prayer: May God make Islam enjoy his long life. So the original appears to have been written down from dictation during Ḥarrālī lifetime, but the BNF 1398 copy itself was recopied in 721/1321 (year is written out, not in numerals, so little chance of error), at Cairo’s khānaqāh saʿīd al-suʿādāʾ.

Another copy of the work (Maktabat Jāmiʿat al-Riyāḍ nr. 133.3) features the year 1191H as the earliest ownership statement date, an indication of the treatise’s popularity and longevity. Brockelmann also cites Br. Mus. 984 as a possible copy.

C) Maktabat Jāmi‘at al-Riyāḍ, 133.3; this copy features 1191/1777 as the earliest ownership statement date, an indication of the treatise’s popularity and longevity.

D) Br. Mus 984.6.638

Studies:
A) Nwyia, Ḥarrālī, pp. 177-91.
B) Kh. 2011, pp. 207-40.

_Tafhīm maʿānī al-ḥurūf allatī hīya mawādd al-kalim fī alsinat jamīʿ al-umam_

Manuscripts:
A) BNF 1398, fols. 112a-121a; date: 721/1321; copyist: Lajīn (?) al-Makramānī; location: Khānaqāh Saʿīd al-suʿadā’, Cairo.

Publications:
A) Ḥarrālī, _Tafhīm maʿānī al-ḥurūf_ (pp. 33-56) in “Risālatān fī sirr al-ḥurūf wa-maʿānīhā : al-ūlā, Sirr al-ḥurūf lī li-Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbīnāy, Tafhīm maʿānī al-ḥurūf’al-musammāh, Mawwād al-kalim fī alsinat jamīʿ al-umam lī-Abī ʿAbīnāyli-Ḥasan al-Ḥarrālī”, ed. Abd al-Ḥamīd Ṣāliḥ Ḥamdān, [Cairo] : al-Maktabah al-Azharīyah lil-Turāth, [2005?]. The editor’s rationale appears to have been that Ibn ʿArabī and Ḥarrālī’s teachings on _ʿilm al-ḥurūf_ are complementary. Ḥarrālī’s treatise seemed to the editors a more systematic and didactic exposition of lettrism than Ibn ʿArabī’s, and hence they took the decision to append it as a kind of helpful commentary, though Ḥarrālī obviously did not intend for it to be as such. In fact, it is more of a glossary to his own _Lamḥah._

Studies:

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638 Cited in Brock. t. 1, p. 414.
A) Nwyia, Ḥarrālī, pp. 191-3.

B) Kh. 2011, pp. 240-247.

Ḥikam

This collection of aphorisms attributed to Ḥarrālī does not follow any discernable thematic structure and is therefore probably not a work which Ḥarrālī deliberately composed. Many of the aphorisms may have originally been oral responses given by Ḥarrālī to various questions he received during teaching sessions.

Manuscripts:
A) BNF 1398, fols. 176a-187b.

Publications:

Studies:


C) Kh. 2011, pp. 279-312.

Sharḥ asmā’ Allāh

Manuscripts:
A) Parliamentary Library of Iran (Kitābkhāneh Majlis Shūrā), collection nr. 27842; date: 696/1296; location: al-Madrasah al-Qaymarīyah (or al-‘Umarīyah, or al-Ṣaymārīyah), Damascus; the text was read and studied at other locations including al-khānaqāh al-Samisāṭīyah, Damascus. What is remarkable is that the copyist, Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-‘Asqalānī639 (673-701/1274-1302), was a friend (ṣāḥibunā wa-rafīqunā) of Dhahabī. The latter’s Siyar is the earliest source to attribute this work to Ḥarrālī.640

B) al-Maktabah al-Azharīyah, (nr. 92214?), year (of archiving?) = 1966.

C) Damascus Zāhirīyah 8986 [7375 tā’]. Description: 36 folios with extensive commentary and correction (muṣahḥahah) on the margins. Ownership statement date: 1257/1841.641

D) Damascus Zāhirīyah 8926. Description: 199 folios; Date: 897/1491; however the title of this one is al-Aghnā (or al-I’tinā’) fi sharḥ asmā’ Allāh al-ḥusnā and the opening and ending lines are completely different than the other manuscript copies.

Notable References:

Although not part of the BNF 1398 collection owned by Biqāʿī, Ḥarrālī’s commentary on the divine names is cited on a handful of occasions in Naẓm al-durar.642

\textit{Ibdā’ al-khafā’ fi sharḥ asmā’ al-Muṣṭafā} 


640 Dhahabī, Siyar, vol. 23, p. 47. See also Kh. 2011, p. 131.

641 Cited in fihris of the Zāhirīyah in Damascus.

Amounting to around one hundred and fifty pages in Mazīdī’s edition, the *Ibda’* is one of the more lengthy of Ḥarrālī’s extant treatises. In this work, Ḥarrālī cites nine-nine names of the Prophet Muḥammad and goes on to provides quite detailed commentary on each of them. Despite what the title and subject might suggest, the *Ibdā’* is not just a simple homiletic work but rather contains some of the more elaborate articulations of Ḥarrālī’s metaphysics. Like his *Lamḥah fī ma’rifat al-ḥurūf*, it is all but impossible to accurately sum up the content of the *Ibdā’* in a one or two paragraphs.

One feature worth mentioning is that, like other works by Ḥarrālī, the *Ibdā’* cites numerous ḥadīth of apocryphal or dubious origin (without providing any recension). For many of these, the editor was able to locate references in obscure ḥadīth collections, some from the Shīʿī tradition. For other ḥadīths, however, Mazīdī simply writes in his footnotes the quite astonishing phrase: “ḥadīth kashfī ṣaḥīḥ”. A known Sufi sympathizer who has edited the works of several marginalized mystics (including for example Ibn Sabʿīn), Mazīdī is evidently prepared to give Ḥarrālī complete carte blanche to cite traditions which he may have received “directly” from the Prophet.

**Manuscripts:**

A) Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyah. Mazīdī cites the library but not the number of the copy used in his edition. It is not listed in *Fihris al-Makḥūṭāt al-ʿArabīyah bi-Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyah* (*al-majāmī‘*), (4 vols., London, 2011). According to Mazīdī, the scribal colophon indicates that it was recopied in 1118/1707 on the basis of a chain of copies that apparently goes back to an original that was read before the author (*quri‘atʿalā mu‘allif*) on Tuesday, 1 Dhū al-Ḥijjah, in the year 833—though surely the latter should be read as 633 ( = August, 1236).
B) Turkey, Bashīr Āghā 1/809.\(^{643}\)

C) Tūnis, al-Khizānah al-Waṭanīyah, nr. 19352.\(^{644}\)

Publications:


Notable References:

A) Munāwī, Fayḍ al-qidīr, vol. 1, p. 48, 1f. Munāwī’s work quotes dozens of concise etymological definitions by Ḥarrālī. The source of most of these is Ḥarrālī’s tafsīr. But at least one definition in the Fayḍ is from the Ibdā’. The definition in question is Ḥarrālī’s analysis of the term ism, which he claims has a double derivation from [wsm] and [smw]. This suggests that Munāwī had access to this work.\(^{646}\)

B) Āmīrī al-Ḥarāḍī (d. 893/1488), Bahjat al-maḥāfīl, (Jiddah, 2009), p. 429.\(^{647}\)

\(^{643}\) Cited in editor’s introduction of al-Darʾī, Talkhīṣ, pp. 25-6.


\(^{645}\) Ḥarrālī’s Ibdā’ was published as part of a volume containing the works of two later scholars on the same subject. The first work in the volume is ‘Abd al-Wahhāb ibn Aḥmad al-Ḥamādī’s (d. ca. 1151/1738) ‘Iqd al-zabarjad min ḥurūf sayyidinā Muḥammad. The second work in the volume is Ḥarrālī’s Ibdā’. The third work in the volume is Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Khalīlī’s (d. 1147/1734) Fakhr al-abrār fi baʾd mā fi ism sayyidinā Muḥammad al-mukhtār min al-asrār. The volume as a whole often goes by the title of the first work (‘Iqd al-zabarjad).

\(^{646}\) It’s worth noting that the editor of the Fayḍ correctly identifies Ḥarrālī but notes that in some manuscript copies the name was written as [Jazāllī] and [Ḥarrānī]. On the margins of one copy it was suggested that the name could refer to [Jazūlī].

\(^{647}\) The opening line of a chapter on the Prophet’s names reads: “Know that this subject is a vast one, and many have written on it. Among the most comprehensive works on this subject is the book by the virtuous shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ḥarrānī [sic] al-Maghribī, for he has cited ninety-nine names describing beautiful qualities, and has commented on them admirably. [In the following chapter] I quote from [Ḥarrālī] and from others”.  

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C) Abī al-Wafā’ al-Qurashī’s (d. 1373), Jawāhir al-muḍīyah fī ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanafiyyah, (Jīzah, 1993), vol. 1, pp. 32-4.648

D) A couple of contemporary authors attribute to Ḥarrālī the title Sharḥ al-sunnah al-‘ilmīyah fī al-asmā’ al-nabawīyah. It is unclear if this is a variant title or a separate treatise on the same subject.649

al-Īmān al-tāmm bi-Muḥammad ‘alayh al-salām

Ḥarrālī’s al-Īmān, or “Consummate belief in Mūḥammad pbuh”, appears in one respect to be a relatively simple, devotional homiletic on the Prophet. It even gives the sense that it is distantly inspired by the creedal manifestos of theologians, for it places a great premium upon the accuracy of the articles of belief. At the highest level, faith in the Prophet also entails a perfect cognizance of three important features of Prophet’s reality: his servanthood (‘ubūdīyatih), the greatness of his psychological makeup (‘ażīmu khulqih), and the nobleness of his corporeal being (khulqih al-karīm). Much of the work is devoted to discussing and illustrating these three aspects of the Prophet’s reality, with frequent reference to ḥadīth.

But there is also a deeper articulation of mystical doctrine about the totalizing, spiritual nature of the Prophet. For example, at the highest level of faith in the Prophet, he is understood as subsuming all previous prophets and encompassing their qualities. Thus, to embody the

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648 In a section on the names of the Prophet, Qurashī attributes to Ḥarrālī the title Asmā’ al-Nabīy, in which are cited ninety-nine names. This title is also attributed to Harrālī in Celebi, Kashf, vol. 1, pp. 89-90; and in Munajjid, Mu’jam ma ullif a‘an rasūl Allāh, p. 37, which gives the manuscript reference: Berlin, coll. 9516.

649 Cited in editor’s introduction to Dar‘ī, Talkhīṣ, p. 26, which gives the manuscript reference: Top Kapu, 6016 M 441. Same title and manuscript reference is cited in Munajjid, Mu’jam ma ullif a‘an rasūl Allāh, p. 39.
spiritual qualities of one of the earlier prophets—as certain exceptional individuals in the Muslim community do—is to inherit a piece of the all-encompassing spiritual reality of the Prophet Muḥammad. This and the next treatise hint at possibly Ḥarrālī’s role in bringing the Sufi metaphysical concept of the Muḥammadan reality into mainstream sunni scholarly discourse.

Manuscripts:

A) Berlin, nr. 1743.650

B) Ḥarrālī’s al-Īmān al-Ṭāmm is included (apparently in full) as part of a more extensive and still unedited work by Hibat Allāh Ibn al-Bārizī (d. 783/1338) titled Tawthīq ʿurā al-īmān fī tafḍīl Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān. Among several extant manuscripts of the work is BNF Arabe 1970 (273 fols.) which has been digitized and made publicly available online. In this codex, Ḥarrālī’s work is included as the 11th of 12 chapters (fols. 213b-232a).651 Ibn al-Bārizī’s inclusion of Ḥarrālī’s work is almost certainly due to his having access to it in Ḥamāh, perhaps as part of a greater body of Ḥarrālī’s written legacy that survived locally in that city and/or that was preserved by the Ibn al-Bārizī family.


Studies:

650 Cited in Brock. t. 1, p. 414. This is one of the manuscripts consulted by Khayyāṭī in his study of the text.

651 Appended as the 12th chapter of the Tawthīq is a work by Ḥujjat al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn Zafar al-Ṣiqillī (d. 565/1170), an Arab scholar born in Sicily who also ended his days in Ḥamāh. The work in question is his Khayr al-bishar fī khayr al-bashar, which falls in the dalā’il al-nubuwwah genre. On Ibn Zafar See Rizzitano, EI2, “Ibn Zafar”; Demiri, Chrisitan-Muslim Relations 600-1500, “Ibn Zafar”, and “Khayr al-bishar bi-khayr al-bashar”.

652 Cited in Kh. 2011, p. 134
A) Tor Andræ, *die Person Muhammeds*, pp. 225-310.653

B) Khayyāṭī, 2011, pp. 139-58.

**Variant Titles:**

A) ‘*Alam (or ‘*Ilm) al-‘īmān al-tāmm bi-nubuwwat Muḥammad ‘alayhi al-salām fī khalqih al-karīm wa-khulqih al-‘ażīm.*654

**Futyā ṣalāḥ al-‘amal li-intizār al-ajal**

Ḥarrālī’s Futyā, or “Council on the sanctification of action while awaiting death”, is a short treatise of roughly 10 folios still in manuscript. The short work is essentially a prescriptive, moralizing sermon that lays out in minute detail an ideal plan action for a day in the life of the believer. Based on the ḥadīth “Whosoever devotes himself to God for forty days, on his tongue the springs of wisdom shall spring”.655 Ḥarrālī structures this daily religious schedule around the five daily prayers, describing the intention and spiritual psychology with which the worshiper must approach these canonical rites, as well as detailing various supererogatory prayers and formulas of supplication. Ḥarrālī even mentions such mundane practices as using *miswāk*. Apparently based on the Prophetic Sunnah and Ḥarrālī often invokes relevant ḥadīth.

One of the more interesting speculative aspects of the *Futyā*, which Nwyia rightly highlights, is Ḥarrālī’s assignment of each of the five daily prayers to one of the major prophets.

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655 The ḥadīth is judged weak and Ibn Jawzī specifically criticizes Sufis and ascetics who take their cue from this ḥadīth to perform the forty day retreat. Strangely, however, Ibn Taymiyāh appears to accept this ḥadīth or at least its spirit. Even though his main critique of Ḥarrālī is that the latter cites too many weak traditions. Ibn Jawzī, *Mawdā’āt*, vol. 3, pp. 144-5. Ibn Taymiyāh, *Nubuwwāt*, p. 409.
Thus the dusk prayer (al-Maghrib) corresponds to the “spiritual time” of Adam, for it was at this hour that he regretted his disobedience and repented (fol. 5a). The night prayer recalls the “spiritual time” of Abraham who was charged with his mission at night following the famous Qur’ānic story of his bewilderment (6b). The dawn prayer corresponds to the “religious time” of Moses and his community to whom God gave the goods of this world. The midday prayer is reminiscent to the “spiritual time” of Jesus, whose mission was to call the children of Israel to leave behind their worldly desires and aspire to divine mercy in the afterlife (4a). It is thus the best time to ask God for the goods of the hereafter. The midafternoon prayer corresponds to the “spiritual time” of Muḥammad and has a special importance in light of his message, for it bookends the astronomical day (nahār) just as his mission bookends all the divine messages (4b, 5a).

Manuscripts:

A) Paris BNF 1398 fols. 2a-11a; the Futyā is sequentially the first treatise of the BNF collection and its title page clearly displays the ownership signature of Ibrāhīm al-Biqā‘ī.

B) Berlin 1743.

C) al-Maktabah al-Qāsimīyah, 7/70. Copied circa 16th/10th century.

Studies:


B) Kh. 2011, pp. 159-76.

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*al-Nuṣḥ al-‘āmm li-kulli man qāl rabī Allāh thumma istaqām*

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656 Cited in Kh. 2011, p. 134.

Harrālī’s *al-Nuṣḥ*, or “General advice for one who declares my lord is Allāh and straightens up”, is a relatively short treatise of approximately 30 folios. Up to a dozen or more manuscript copies of this work are extant in various libraries. No editions of this work have appeared, though it has been described at considerable length by Khayyāṭī. Ḥarrālī’s *Nuṣḥ* comes close to rivaling his *Fath* in terms of the prevalence of manuscript copies and its enduring popularity. Falling in the *mawāʾīz* genre of religious literature, the *Nuṣḥ* represents one of the most socially conscious and intellectually accessible of Ḥarrālī’s works.

Its object is to delineate, for multiple layers of Muslim society, practical advice to achieve the Qurʾān-inspired virtue uprightness (*istiqāmah*). The themes discussed in this tract are consistent with those found in some of Ḥarrālī’s other works: conforming to the state of servanthood vis-à-vis God (*ʿubūdīyah*), abandoning the illusion of personal freedom (*ḥurrīyah*), and reliance on God (*tawakkul*). What is remarkable is that Ḥarrālī tailors his prescription to

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658 I have personally been able to acquire electronic versions of the three copies preserved at al-Maktabah al-Malakīyah in Rabat: nr. 208 (approx. 70 folios), nr. 3932 (approx. 50 folios), and nr. 10027 (approx. 20 folios). The last of these was copied in 1234/1818-9; the rest are undated but seem much older. Additional libraries that house manuscript copies include al-Maktabah al-Tīmūrīyah, Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyah, and Dār al-Kutub al-Tūnisīyah. Variant titles of the work include “*al-Istiqāmah*” and “*al-Istiqāmah li-al-najāt yawm al-qiyyāmah*”. Cited in Kh. 2011, pp. 127-8.

659 Kh. 2011, pp. 179-203.

660 The intellectual accessibility of the content and the prevalence of manuscripts in Moroccan libraries would suggest, at first glance, that this treatise may have been composed at an early stage of Ḥarrālī’s career, perhaps while he was still living in the Far Maghrib. At the same time, the treatise is also one which Ḥarrālī reportedly dictated to Salāwī in Damascus very late in his career. This does not prove that the treatise was written at that time, but it does bring to mind the possibility that he authored it after he left the Far Maghrib, and that it was simply “reimported” back to the Far Maghrib through the medium of a figure like Ibn Rushayd.

661 The principle of uprightness or steadfastness (*istiqāmah*) is derived from the following passages in the Qurʾān: Truly those who say, “Our Lord is God,” then stand firm, the angels will descend upon them, [saying], “Fear not, nor grieve, and rejoice in the Garden that you have been promised, (SQ 41:30) And: Truly those who say, “Our Lord is God,” then stand firm, no fear shall come upon them; nor shall they grieve (SQ 46:15).
almost every economic niche of medieval, largely urban (and presumably male) Muslim society, including those involved in trade (tijārah), manufacture (ṣinā‘ah), real estate (samsarah), porterage (himālah), military (jundīyah), tax collection (jabāyah), governing (imārah), prison-keeping and flogging (sajjānah, jallādah), education (tadrīs), and medicine (taṭbīb). Ḥarrālī’s aim is to describe the unique paths, moral ethos, spiritual method for achieving, from within the context of each one of these professions, the foundational virtue of moral uprightness, which ultimately leads on to spiritual perfection and sainthood.

**Attributed Poetry**

Ḥarrālī does not employ poetry as a medium of expression in his writings, a fact which reflects a certain sobriety in his style and a pedagogical directness. He is also not known for his use of flowery language or rhyming prose in his doxologies. Ḥarrālī’s style of prose can sometimes be of a grammatical and structural complexity which, while it could not rightly be describe it as poetic, is still pregnant with meaning in a way that forces the reader to pause and reflect as one would when trying to decipher the meaning of poetry—but again this is less for aesthetic reasons and more because the ideas are condensed and because Ḥarrālī often uses words in a technical, idiosyncratic manner.

Ḥarrālī did compose some poetry, however, and these lines appear to have been recorded by his disciples, which is why various poems or fragments of poems are found scattered throughout the biographical literature. Totaling less than forty lines, Ḥarrālī’s poetic output can be found primarily in the ‘Unwān, the Sabk, the Mil’, and Tārīkh Irbil. Ḥarrālī’s poetic legacy has been studied by Khayyāṭī. Anoter study of Ḥarrālī’s poetic legacy is the conference paper by
Soulami. Both studies reproduce all of Ḥarrālī’s poetry from the various sources (but not including the poetry cited in Ibn al-Mustawfi’s Tārīkh Irbil and Udfuwī’s Badr). As Soulami rightly points out, Ḥarrālī’s poetry in not cited to a great extent in later Sufi literature and, when it is, the attribution is often anonymous. For example, a total of eight lines of Ḥarrālī’s poetry are cited with no attribution in Ibn al-Dabbāgh’s (d. 1300) Mashāriq anwār al-qlūb, centered on the theme of Sufi love. Single lines of Ḥarrālī’s poetry are also cited, anonymously, in Ibn ‘Abbād al-Rundi’s (d. 792/1390) Sharḥ Ḥikam Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh; in Majrūtī’s (d. 1595) al-Nafḥ al-miskīyah fī al-safārah al-Turkīyah; Abū al-Fayḍ’s (d. 1232/1816) Sharḥ ‘uqūd al-Fāṭihah; Ibn ‘Ajībah’s (d. 1809) Miʿrāj al-tashawwuf and his Īqāẓ al-himam.

Of the poems by Ḥarrālī conserved in the ‘Unwān, Dermenghem has translated all into French and has broadly characterized them as:

…classiques, fort curieux et d’une grande beauté, dans lesquels il s’efforce de faire passer la vibration de la doctrine. Ses vers n’ont pas l’incomparable fluidité, la richesse et la triomphante aisance des qaṣīdas d’un Ibn al-Fāriḍ, ni la rigueur magistrale des poèmes d’un Ibn ‘Arabi. Ils ont

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663 Dabbāgh, Mashāriq anwār al-qlūb, pp. 65, 102. The lines cited by Dabbāgh are also found in Ḥarrālī’s notices in the ‘Unwān and the Sabk. Dabbāgh, it will be recalled, is also the author of the Manāqib of Dahmānī in which he cites a couple of anecdotes on the authority of Ḥarrālī, although the name is mistranscribed in both the manuscript and the edition.

664 Cited in Soulami, Diwān al-Ḥarrālī, p. 89.

665 Majrūtī, Nafḥah, p. 156.

666 Cited in Soulami, Diwān al-Ḥarrālī, p. 89.

quelque chose de translucide, de Mallarmé⁶⁶⁸, de cristallin, dans leur volonté de refléter l’essence métaphysique sans tomber dans le didactisme.⁶⁶⁹

In the following poem, which I will let Dermenghem translate into French, Ḥarrālī evokes various philosophical and spiritual themes, while employing terminology that is reminiscent at turns of Qur’ānic imagery (kitāb, qalam) and the metaphysics of Ibn ‘Arabī (wujūd, fayḍ):

Nous n’avons de nous-mêmes que l’état néantiel (mā la-nā minnā siwā al-ḥāl al-‘adam)
A notre Créateur l’Existence et l’Éternité (wa li-bārīnā wujūd wa-qidam)
Nous sommes une construction éphémère par une Sagesse (naḥnu bīnayān banathu ḥīkmah)
et toute construction est appelée à être démolie (wa-khaliq bi-al-bīnā an yunhadam)
Nous sommes les livres de Dieu. Ne peut les lire (nāhnu kutub Allāh mā yaqra‘uḥā)
que celui qui connaît l’Idée de la Plume (ghayra man ya‘rif mā ma‘nā al-qalam)
Et les lettres des livres de Celui qui a créé cette Plume (ahruf al-kutubi al-ladhī abda‘ahu)
chaque fois qu’apparaissent Des Idées, s’obscurcissent (kullāmā lāḥat ma‘ānī in‘ajam)
Nos âmes ont jailli de Sa lumière (aṣḥaqat anfusunā min nūrīhi)
et l’existence du Tout vient du débordement de la Générosité (fa-wujūdū al-kullī ‘an faṣīlī al-karam)
L’âme s’amonit devant Celui qui la connaît [alternate translation: the soul ascends beyond its world] (fa-tairq[ā] al-nafsū ‘an ’ālimihā ’ālimihā)
et elle se cache dans une retraite que les soucis ne peuvent atteindre (bi-ikhtibā’ laysa tudnih al-

Personne ne connaît qui je suis si ce n’est moi! (laysa yadrī man anā illā anā)
C’est ce que la raison n’arrive plus à saisir (ḥā hunā al-fahmu ‘an al-‘aqīlī inbaḥam)
Etonnantes, vraiment, les prétentions du Tout! (‘ajaban li-al-kullī fi-mā yadda’ī)
Ne peut atteindre le Tout que ce qu’il veut (wa-ta‘ī al-kulla illā mā ḥakam)
Chaque fois que je desire m’unir à mon Essence (kullāmā rumtu bi-dhāfi wiṣlatan)
la raison et la science deviennent pour moi des ciseaux (ṣāra lī al-‘aql ma‘a al-‘ilmī jalam)
C’est ells qui me coupent, avec les phantasmes illusoires (yaqta‘ānī bi-khayālātin al-fanā)
d’une existence libérée du néant (‘an wujūd lam yuqayyad bi-‘adam)⁶⁷⁰


⁶⁶⁹ Dermenghem, Coufi, pp. 47-8.

In the following poem, also translated by Dermenghem, Ḥarrālī alludes to spiritual enlightenment and “verification” (tahqiq). It’s worth pointing out that the poem has sometimes been attributed to Abū Madyan⁶⁷¹ and to Ibn ‘Arabi⁶⁷².

Depuis que nous nous sommes absents loin de toi, cette année-là, (wa-mudh 'anka ghibnā dhālika al-'ām innanā) nous sommes descendus vers un mer, et le rivage de cette me rest une demeure (nazalnā 'alā bahrin wa-sāḥilahu ma'nā)

Et il y avait au-dessus de cette demeure un soleil qui montait à notre horizon (wa-shams 'alā al-ma'nā tuṭāli' ufuqinā)

Le coucher de ce soleil est en nous et c’est de nous que surgit son aurore (fa-maghribihā fīnā wa-mashriqiḥā minnā)

Nos mains ont touché ses joyaux don’t nos âmes sont sorties (wa-massat yadānā jawharan min-hu rakibat) et, à ce moment, sous sommes devenus des joyaux (nufūsun lanā lambā safat fa-tajawharnā)

Dis-nous qu’est-ce donc ce soleil, quel est son sens et son secret (fa-mā al-sirru wa-al-ma'nā wa-mā al-shamsu qul lanā) et quelle est cette perle de la mer [alternate trans: and what is the utmost limit of the sea which we have traversed] (wa-mā ghāyat al-bahr al-ladḥī 'anhu 'abarnā)

Nous sommes descendus dans un univers dont le nom chez nous est le vide (ḥallalnā wujūdan ismuḥu 'inda al-fāḏā') qui est trop étroit pour nous contenir mais que nous pouvons contenir en nous (yaḏīqu bi-nā wus'an wa-nahnu fa-mā diqnah)

Nous avons laissé derrière nous les mers tumultueuses (taraknā al-biḥar al-zākhirāt warā 'anā) Comment les gens pourraient-ils savoir vers quoi nous nous sommes dirigés? (fa-min ayna yadrī al-nāsu ayna tawajjahnā)⁶⁷³

Other Attributed Works

The following are among the most noteworthy works attributed to Ḥarrālī in various biographical sources:

⁶⁷¹ Cited in Dermenghem, Coufi, p. 48, 25f.
⁶⁷² The first line is attributed to Ibn ‘Arabi in Mazīdī, Mawsū‘at, p. 15.
Sharh al-Muwaṭṭa’ – Even if no pure legal works of Ḥarrālī survive, it is not surprising that a commentary on the Muwaṭṭa’ of Mālik would be attributed to him by Ibn Ṭawwāḥ (Sabk) and Munāwī (Kawākib), especially in view of Ḥarrālī’s expertise on the subject as conveyed through other biographical anecdotes.674

al-Wāfī – A work on the science of inheritance (farā’id) reportedly studied by Ghubrīnī, who praises it and claims that Ḥarrālī managed to summarize the main principles of the discipline in an incomparably concise yet clear manner.675

Work(s) on uṣūl al-fiqh – Several biographers claim Ḥarrālī authored works on uṣūl al-fiqh, including Ghubrīnī and Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, though they don’t provide any titles. Although Biqā’ī does not name the work, he quotes from a work by Ḥarrālī on uṣūl al-fiqh on at least three occasions in his Naẓm al-durar.676

Sharḥ al-Irshād677 – This is most probably a commentary on Juwaynī’s al-Irshād, given how much Ḥarrālī’s teachers and students professionally deal with theology in general and the book in particular.

Sharḥ al-Shifā’ – A commentary on either al-Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ’s al-Shifā’ bi-ta’rīf ḥuqūq al-mustafā or on Ibn Sīnā’s al-Shifā’. Attributed to him only by Munāwī (kawākib), and Zabīdī (Tāj), which are later sources.


675 Ghubrīnī, ‘Unwān, p. 146, and 2f. Two other ms. copies of the ‘Unwān give the variant title al-Zāhī.

676 Cited in Kh. 2011, pp. 133, 6f, 357. One such mention can be found in Biqā’ī, Naẓm (2011), vol. 4, p. 374.

*al-Nāfi’* – Reportedly a commentary on the Kitāb of Sibawayh, this title is attributed to Ḥarrālī by Ibn Ṭawwāḥ.

*Kitāb al-waṣīyah li-sālik ṭarīq al-ṣūfīyah*\(^678\) – This is the work Ḥarrālī reportedly dictated to Salāwī in July 1940 in Damascus. Its probably a book filled with spiritual council. Based on the title, it could possibly contain a critique of certain aspects of Sufism, or a championing of Maghribī Sufism over Mashriqī Sufism.

*Risālah fī al-‘ilm al-ladunī*\(^679\) – This title is attributed to Ḥarrālī in the Kashf al-ẓunūn and, according to Khayyāṭī, there is also a manuscript copy of the work in Rabat which is included as part of a collection attributed to Ḥarrālī.\(^680\) As Khayyāṭī has discovered, however, the text of the Rabat manuscript of the *Risālah* is identical with the text of Ghazālī’s *al-Risālah al-laduniyyah*. One potential reason for the mixup could be that, in certain circumstances, the names of the two figures are liable to be conflated. It’s worth noting, however, that the styles of the two authors differ considerably.

*Asmā’ al-Qur’ān* – The existence of Ḥarrālī’s work is not too surprising given his propensity for weaving his doctrines over an etymological substrate. The only author to attribute this title to Ḥarrālī is Zarkashī in his famous *al-Burhān fī ‘ulūm al-Qur’ān*: “Ḥarrālī has authored a juz’ on [the subject of the names of the Qur’ān] and has determined that [the Qur’ān] has ninety-something names”.\(^681\) This brief mention of Ḥarrālī appears to be only one in Zarakshī’s work, and it suggests that the latter was only vaguely aware of Ḥarrālī and his work on the names of the

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\(^{679}\) Celebi, *Kashf*, vol. 1, p. 878


\(^{681}\) Zarkashī, *Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 273.
Qur’ān. Still, the fact that Ḥarrālī is mentioned in such at all in such a mainstream sunni work on the Qur’ān is significant.

*al-Sirr al-maktūm fī mukhāṭabat al-nujūm* – The *Kashf al-ẓunūn* is the earliest source to equivocate in its attribution of this title to either Ḥarrālī’s or Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī’s. Khayyāṭī’s detailed and deeply researched arguments prove decisively that this astrological treatise is from the pen of Rāzī.682

**Transmission of Ḥarrālī’s Works**

There are a couple of interesting *ijāzah/fahrasah*-type of documents from the Far Maghrib and Granada which attest to the fact that Ḥarrālī’s written legacy continues for several centuries to be formally transmitted from teacher to student. The earliest of these is the *Fahrasah* of the Granadan scholar al-Mintawrī683 (761-834/1360-1431). Although no specific works are cited, Ḥarrālī’s written legacy is categorized in the *taṣawwuf* section.684 Ḥarrālī’s writings are said to have been transmitted to the author via a chain that traces back to Abū Sa‘īd Faraj ibn Qāsim ibn

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683 Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Malik ibn ‘Alī al-Qaysī al-Mintawrī (var. Mintūrī). A Granadan scholar from among one of the last generations who flourished before the fall of the kingdom and the end of Muslim presence in Spain. Mintawrī is regarded as a traditionist of the rank of ḥāfiẓ, as well as being a legist and a master of the Qur’ān reading and recitation. Some of his extant works have been published, for example, his *Sharḥ al-Durar al-lawāmi’ fī aṣl maqra’ al-Imām Nāfī’*, which is a commentary on a work on Qur’ānic readings by ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad Ibn Barrī (ca. 1261-1330), itself a commentary on the teachings of Nāfī’ ibn al-Azraq (d. 684 or 685). Mintawrī’s *Manāḥij al-'ulamā’ al-aḥbār fī tafsīr ahādīth kitāb al-Anwār* is a commentary on the ḥadīth work *Anwār al-sanāyah fī al-ajzb al-sunnīyah* by Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Ibn Juzayy (1294-1340). A full discussion of Mintawrī’s life and works is included in the edition of Fahrasat al-Mintawrī (Rabat, 2011), pp. 11-39. Biographical notices can also be found in Bābā, *Nayl al-ibtihāj*, pp. 495-6, nr. 607; Qarāfī, *Tawshīḥ al-dībāj*, p. 192, nr. 200.

Lubb⁶⁸⁵ (701-782/1301-1381), to al-Wādīyāshī (d. ca. 1345), to al-Ghubrînī (d. 1315), to ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ibn Makhlūf “Ibn Kuḥaylā” (d. 1287), Ḥarrālī’s Bijāyan student.

Similarly, Ḥarrālī’s corpus is mentioned in two later documents by members of a prominent family of religious scholars from Fez. ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Fāsī⁶⁸⁶ (1007-1091/1599-/1680) composed an ijāzah in which we find Ḥarrālī’s legacy classified among the kutub al-qawm category.⁶⁸⁷ Curiously, even though Fāsī’s is a later work, the chain of transmission cited for Ḥarrālī’s legacy is identical to the one cited in the earlier Fahrasah of Mintawrī. In fact, Fāsī’s is even shorter, in that it omits the figure of of Ibn Lubb (d. 1381).

One of ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Fāsī’s immediate teachers however is Aḥmad al-Maqqarī (d. 1632), author of the biographical anthology Nafḥ al-ṭīb, which is one of the earliest Maghribī works to feature an extensive biography on Ḥarrālī. Given that a number of titles, including the Miftāḥ, are mentioned in Ḥarrālī’s notice in the Nafḥ, Maqqarī should be considered a likely transmitter of the Ḥarrālīan corpus.

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⁶⁸⁶ On his biography see Kattānī, Salwat al-anfās, vol. 1, pp. 351-55, nr. 318; Ben Cheneb, Étude, pp. 48-51, with additional references.

⁶⁸⁷ Fasī’s ijāzah has been studied and translated into French by Ben Cheneb (d. 1929) in his Étude sur les personnages mentionnés dans l’idjāza du cheikh ‘Abd el Qādir el Fāsy, (Paris, 1907). Ben Cheneb based his work on an Algerian manuscript copied in 1889. The iṣnād of Ḥarrālī’s works can be found p. 41. However, Ḥarrālī is not one of the 182 figures mentioned in the ijāzah on whom Ben Cheneb provides biographical information, at least in the edition of the Étude at my disposition.
‘Abd al-Qādir al-Fāsī’s grandson, Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Fāsī (1058-1134/1648-1722), also penned an ḣijāzah document titled al-Minaḥ al-bādiyah fi al-asānīd al-ʿāliyah. This document also states that Ḥarrālī’s legacy—referred to as al-ṭarīqah al-Ḥarrāliyah wa-taʿālīfuh—were passed on via an identical chain of transmission. Ḥarrālī, of course, never founded a ṭarīqah in the formal sense, but it is noteworthy and ultimately quite logical that his written legacy—whatever combination of works were circulating in the Maghrib—would be categorized as “Sufi”. In other words, it didn’t matter that Ḥarrālī’s intention was to influence mainstream exoteric scholarship. His works decidedly evinced too much of a Sufi and philosophical orientation to be classified by posterity as part of the riwāyah/naqūlī tradition.

Harrālī’s Contested Image in Later Biographical Literature

Ḥarrālī’s image in the later biographical literature is the object of some interesting contention. The earliest sources paint a portrait that ranges from neutral to overwhelmingly positive. The positive assessments come most notably from Ghubrīnī (d. 1315) and Ibn Ṭawwāḥ (d. after 1318). The former was sympathetic to taṣawwuf and to speculative disciplines. At the same time, he pursued a markedly conciliatory approach to the writing of intellectual history. Ibn Ṭawwāḥ could be justifiably described as an outright partisan of taṣawwuf and a champion of those he considers the most eminent Sufi figures of the Muslims West—Abū Madyan, Shādhilī, Mahdawī, Ibn ‘Arabī, and Ḥarrālī—figures whom he admires and in whose trials he sees a

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689 Besides the recent edition of the Mināḥ (Morocco, 2005), a manuscript from al-Maktabah al-azhariyyah (recopied 1725) has been made publicly available online (see bibliography).

parallel with his own embattled life. Ibn Ṭawwāḥ’s assessment owes at least in part to his having an axe to grind against certain contemporary factions of exoteric-minded ‘ulamā’ and disingenuous Sufis. In Ḥarrālī’s notice proper, Ibn Ṭawwāḥ singles out for criticism Ḥarrālī’s student Ibn Abī al-Dunyā for his failure to appreciate his teacher’s compassionate stance towards sharī‘ah-violating reprobates.

Ghubrīnī and Ibn Ṭawwāḥ are also the most informed biographers on Ḥarrālī’s life—the latter having been the student of several of Ḥarrālī’s students, and the former probably also coming into contact with disciples of Ḥarrālī during a trip to Bijāyah ca. 1300. Although it is not directly about Ḥarrālī but rather his student Salāwī, Ibn al-Rushayd’s Mil’ can also be considered an early source providing a well-informed, positive assessment of our subject. More concise and tempered assessments are provided by Mindhirī (d. 1258), Ibn Abbār (d. 1260), and Ibn al-‘Imādīyah (d. 1275). None of the latter appear to have been familiar with either Ḥarrālī’s writings or his students.

The beginning of the polemical strain against Ḥarrālī in the biographical literature can be quite plainly traced to Dhahabī (d. 1348) whose critiques—articulated unevenly across Ḥarrālī’s notices in the Ta‘rīkh, Siyar, ‘Ibar, and Mīzān—are echoed by almost all later biographers. On a basic level, Dhahabī’s negative view of Ḥarrālī stems from his well-known, fundamental aversion to any form of speculation in doctrine. Ḥarrālī quite easily falls into a blamable category of scholars since, according to Dhahabī, he was devoted to philosophy, theology, logic, and other rational (‘aqliyyāt) and speculative (naẓarīyyāt) sciences. Dhahabī’s views on Ḥarrālī are evidently also informed by his teacher, Ibn Taymīyah (d. 728/1328), who allegedly characterized Ḥarrālī’s taṣawwuf as following the way of the philosophers (‘alā ṭarīqat al-

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691 See the discussion and references in Bori, “Dhahabī”, in EI3.
In reality, Ḥarrālī is not a subject that comes up frequently in Ibn Taymīyah’s writings. In the edited portion of Ibn Taymīyah’s corpus, I have found only two instances of Ḥarrālī being explicitly mentioned. One instance occurs in the context of a discussion on the question of “incarnation” or “immanence” (ḥulūl). Along with Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī, Ibn Barrajān, and Shādhilī, Ibn Taymīyah counts Ḥarrālī as belonging to a category that posits divine transcendence (al-ʻuluw) and only a “mild” form of immanence (naw’ min al-ḥulūl). In Ibn Taymīyah’s heresiological thinking, this category is a level below the most egregious category, led most notably by Ibn ʻArabī, which posits the doctrine of absolute immanence (ḥulūl and ittiḥād).\textsuperscript{692}

In the other instance, Ibn Taymīyah is a somewhat more elaborate on his view of Ḥarrālī. This mention comes in the context of a rather convoluted discussion on the question of ‘Alid loyalism and the use of “fabricated” traditions by Sufīs.\textsuperscript{693} Ibn Taymīyah appears to make a distinction between the worst offenders—namely the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā and Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī—and the relatively benign deviants—of which he names only Ghazālī and Ḥarrālī. While the former group openly flaunts its “Bāṭinī”, “Ismā‘īlī”, and “Shī‘ī” identity, according to Ibn Taymīyah, the latter is merely inclines towards such tendencies and shows a marginal preference for ‘Alī. Among this category of “benign” deviants, Ibn Taymīyah continues:

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\textsuperscript{692} Ibn Taymīyah, \emph{Dar’ taʻārud al-ʻaql wa-al-naql}, vol. 10, pp. 286-7.

\textsuperscript{693} Ibn Taymīyah, \emph{Kitāb al-nubuwwāt}, pp. 402-6.
prophets over [the companions]. In one respect, [Ḫarrālī] is indeed more noble (anbal) than those others. However, he has a weak grasp of ḥadīth, biographies (al-siyar), and the sayings of the companions and followers (tābi‘īn). Thus, he constructs for himself principles (uṣūlan) on [the basis of] fabricated traditions. And his teachings issue from taṣawwuf, from rational sciences (‘aqlīyāt), and from essential truths (ḥaqā‘iq). But he is better than (khayrun min) those others and, in his teachings, there are elements that are excellent and true (ḥasanah ṣahihah), and numerous elements that are false (bāṭilah). God knows best.

Compared to the unrelenting vitriol directed by Ibn Taymiyah at other figures, his assessment of Ḥarrālī is practically glowing. His only concrete criticism, as far as I can tell, is Ḥarrālī’s use of weak traditions—which is actually true and suggests Ibn Taymiyah may have at least perused through some of Ḥarrālī’s works. Less useful is his vague characterization of Ḥarrālī as a proponent of a “type” of Bāṭinī-Ismā‘īlism. Ibn Taymiyah seems fairly convinced, however, that Ḥarrālī did not profess the monist doctrine of wahdat al-wujūd. It will be interesting to see whether future reconstructions of Ḥarrālī’s metaphysics can identify an idea or a language that sets him apart from the school Ibn ‘Arabī and could potentially account for Ibn Taymiyah’s tempered imprimatur.

For purposes here, its worth noting that none of the prosopographical nuance in Ibn Taymiyah’s view of Ḥarrālī survives in Dhahabī’s history. What eventually crystallizes in the later literature is the rather stereotypical label of Ḥarrālī as a “philosophizing Sufi” (falsafīy al-taṣawwuf) which is arguably less of an accurate summary of Ibn Taymiyah’s assessment and more a reflection of Dhahabī’s own anti-speculative idiosyncrasies.

There are other aspects of Dhahabī’s biography of Ḥarrālī that we need to consider. Besides his focus on Ḥarrālī’s penchant for the speculative sciences, Dhahabī also arraigns him for his involvement in the dark art of lettrism. In his Ta’rīkh, Dhahabī alleges that Ḥarrālī

\[694\] Ibn Taymiyah, Kitāb al-nubuwāt, pp. 405-6.
…expounded on the science of letters and numbers, and claimed to have deduced the sign of the time of the emergence of the dajjāl (za'ama annahu istakhraja 'alam waqti khurūj al-dajjāl), and the time of the rising of the sun from the west, and Gog and Magog.

Being itself a type of speculation, the science of letters was probably seen by Dhahabī as deserving of at least as much condemnation as theology or logic. His censure of Ḥarrālī’s vaticinal pretensions is particularly harsh in the Ḍī‘lān:

Such sciences and eschatological determinations (taḥdīdāt) were not known even by God’s messengers. In fact, all of them, including Nūḥ, dreaded [the prospect of] the dajjāl, and warned his people about the dajjāl. And here is our Prophet saying: “If he [the dajjāl] emerges and I am among you, I will be the one to defeat him”. These ignoramuses are his [i.e. the dajjāl’s] kin (hā’ulā’ al-jahalah ikhwatuh), claiming knowledge of when he will emerge. We ask God to grant us security (nas‘al Allāh al-salāmah).

In spite of all of the above criticisms, Dhahabī also offers some praise of Ḥarrālī. The overall effect, however, is more disconsonant than it is balanced. For example, following up on the above passage, Dhahabī abruptly waxes eulogistic, before ending the notice with a phrase that later historians implicitly took to be ex-communicative:

It has been said that [Ḥarrālī] strongly evinced moral virtues (mushārakah qawīyah fī al-faḍā‘īl), boundless magnanimity (ḥulm mufrīt), and a becoming mannerism (ḥusnu samtin). But I am not aware that he possessed a solid [ḥadīth] recension (lā a‘lam la-hu riwāyah). He died in Ḥamāh before 640. May God have mercy on Muslims (raḥima Allāhu al-muslimīn).

Reading Dhahabī’s biographies of Ḥarrālī, one gets the distinct feeling that he was being pulled from two opposing directions. Besides his own biases, the views of Ibn Taymīyah, and the critical views of other unidentified sources, Dhahabī also drew his information from other teachers and colleagues who looked favorably on Ḥarrālī. For example, Majd al-Dīn al-Tūnisī

695 Majd al-Dīn Abū Bakr ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim (al-Mursī?) al-Tūnisī. Born in 656/1258 in Tunis, this figure later studied grammar and Qurʾān reading in Cairo under al-Ḥasan al-Rāshīdī. He then moved to Damascus where he associated with Zayn al-Dīn al-Zawāwī. He also held a salaried post as a Sufi (ruttība ṣūfīyān) at the Khānaqāh al-Shahābīyāh. Starting in 693/1293, Tūnisī held several notable posts in Damascus—all apparently having to do with Qurʾān reading—including al-mashyakhah al-kubrā, the mashyakhah of al-Turbah al-Ashraftiyah and the mashyakhah of Jāmi‘ al-Tūbah. Dhahabī studied Qurʾān readings with Tūnisī and describes him as a grammarian and a specialist of Shāfiʿī ṣūl. Dhahabī also lauds him as a man who combined moral virtue and religiosity with sharpness of mind (hiddat al-dhihn) and strength of intelligence (quwwat al-dhakā‘). Tūnisī came to rest in Damascus. Dhahabī, Ta’rīkh, vol.
(d. 718/1319), a teacher whom Dhahabī holds in great esteem, apparently placed great value on Ḥarrālī’s Qur’an commentary (yataghālā fī tafsīrih). Another shaykh of Dhahabī who extolled Ḥarrālī’s character and his written legacy is the aforementioned Sharaf al-Dīn Ibn al-Bārizī (645-737/1247-1338), whose family graciously hosted Ḥarrālī in Ḥamāh. Of this same generation, another Ḥarrālī-admirer is Ibn al-Zamalkānī696 (667-727/1268-1327), a prominent Damascene Shāfi‘ī jurist, Ash‘arī theologian, friend of Sharaf al-Dīn Ibn al-Bārizī and opponent of Ibn Taymīyah.697 That Dhahabī passes on the positive evaluations of Ḥarrālī by these figures is a testament, one must admit, to a real form of historiographical honesty.

Dhahabī himself does not appear to have personally read much of Ḥarrālī’s corpus, with the possible exception of Sharḥ al-asmā’ al-ḥusnā. In the Ta‘rīkh, Dhahabī makes the following statement apparently in reference to Ḥarrālī’s treatise on the divine names: “[Ḥarrālī] has a style of expression that is pleasing to the utmost degree and an eloquence and a way of making clear (‘ibārah ḥilwah ilā al-ghāyah wa-faṣāḥah wa-bayān).” We know from manuscript evidence that copies of Ḥarrālī’s Sharḥ were circulating in Damascene scholarly circles at the turn of the 14th century.

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697 Ibn al-Zamalkānī’s favorable views on Ḥarrālī are not reported by Dhahabī but rather in the notice on Ḥarrālī in Ibn Faḍl Allāh, Masālik, vol. 8, pp. 226-8, nr. 94.
century. In fact, the copyist of one manuscript of the *Sharḥ* is Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf-”Asqalānī698 (673-701/1274-1302) who was a friend (ṣāḥibunā wa-rafiqunā) of Dhahabī.

By his own admission, Dhahabī never read Ḥarrālī’s infamous commentary on the Qurʾān, by which he could mean either the *tafsīr* proper but also the *Miftāḥ*. Dhahabī says: “I have not yet verified (lam ataḥqaq baʿd) what doctrines [the *tafsīr*] enfolded (mā kāna yanṭawī ʿalayhi min al-ʾiqaḍ)” (*Taʿrīkh*). This does not prevent him from affirming as fact the negative assessments of the *tafsīr* by anonymous reviewers, such as it supposedly being filled with “his doctrines (ḥaqāʾiqihi) and the results of his cerebration (natāʾij fikrihi)”699, with “speculations (iḥtimālāt) that are fundamentally not supported by the Arabic language (lā yaḥṭamiluḥu al-khiṭāb al-ʿarabīyya aslan)”, and various other “things that are bizarrely worded (ashyāʾ ʿajībat al-ustūb)”. Dhahabī leaves it up to his readers to figure out how the the author of such an outlandish and philologically improbable Qurʾān commentary could have also possessed “eloquence and clarity” (faṣāḥah wa-bayān).

Despite the few accolades included, Dhahabī’s judgement generally comes across as negative, and his condemnation decisively influences a whole strain of later biographers, most of whom rely on Dhahabī completely and have little original information on Ḥarrālī. All reiterate specifically the “philosophizing Sufi” label and the imputation of Ḥarrālī’s prediction of the

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698 Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf ibn Abī al-Faraḥ al-’Asqalānī. A faqīh and Qurʾān reciter. It should be pointed out the Dhahabī never refers to ‘Asqalānī’s opinions of Ḥarrālī, which were presumably positive. The collection recopied by ‘Asqalānī (Kitābkhāneh Majlis Shūrā, 27842) contains Ḥarrālī’s *Sharḥ al-asmāʾ al-ḥusnā* and his *Miftāḥ* trilogy. On ‘Asqalānī’s biography see Dhahabī, *al-Mu‘jam al-kabīr*, vol. 2, p. 311, nr. 879.

699 Munāwī’s review of Ḥarrālī’s *tafsīr* (mentioned earlier in the section on Ḥarrālīs extant works) puts a positive spin on Dhahabī’s words, turning them around in such a way as to show that Ḥarrālī’s originality is a good thing: “[Ḥarrālī] composed a commentary [on the Qurʾān] which he packed with his essential doctrine (ḥaqāʾiqihi), the intricate inferences of his thought (daqāʾiqi fikrihi), and the products of his intellectual genius (natāʾij qarīḥatihi).” But it should be stressed that Munāwī had demonstrably read the *tafsīr* and other writings by Ḥarrālī. Munāwī, *Kawākir*, vol. 1, p. 465.
coming of the *dajjāl*. The earliest of these is Ṣafādī (d. 1363) who, for all that, is not willfully polemical, but since he bases his short notice on Ḥarrālī entirely on Dhahabī, he invariably recapitulates the same heterogenous assessment. The same observation holds for the compendious notices composed by Yāfi‘ī (d. 1367) and Ghassānī (d. 1400).

The real polemical contention over Ḥarrālī’s legacy is ignited by the figures of Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalānī (d. 1449) and Sakhāwī (d. 1497). By this time, it appears Ghubrīnī’s *'Unwān* had also achieved a greater level of circulation. Thus, the two aforementioned polemicists are among the first to have access to both Dhahabī’s predominantly negative assessment of Ḥarrālī and the unreservedly positive one by Ghubrīnī. They have the option of privileging one over the other.\footnote{Although ‘Aqalānī only cites as sources Dhahabī and Ibn Abbār, he also mentions anecdotal details that appear in neither source but which can, however, be located in Ghubrīnī. This includes the description of Ḥarrālī’s *Mīfāḥ* as a treatise laying out principles of *tafsīr* akin to those found in *uṣūl al-fiqh*. As well, it includes the brief anecdote about Ḥarrālī’s spiritual combat against his *nafs* (which resulted in him regarding as equal those who gave him *dīnārs* and those who insulted him). And also the account of Ḥarrālī’s foreknowledge that, on the day of his death, he would pass away during the call to the *'āṣr* prayer.}

Still, neither seems to have studied Ḥarrālī’s corpus. ‘Asqalānī reiterates the worst charges brought by Dhahabī, including the suggestion that Ḥarrālī was an ignoramous in cahoots with the *dajjāl* himself. ‘Asqalānī also repeats some of the positive things said by Dhahabī, but makes sure to quote the latter all the way to the end, with the prayer “May God have mercy on Muslims”, a phrase which he interprets as rendering Ḥarrālī beyond the pale of Islam.\footnote{‘Asqalānī’s notice on Ḥarrālī appears to be the sole basis of those by Suyūṭī (d. 1505) in *Tabaqāt al-mufassirīn* and Dawūdī (d. 1538) in his biographical anthology by the same name.}

Strictly speaking, Sakhāwī is not the author of an integral notice on Ḥarrālī, however, he does mention the latter on a handful of occasions in his polemical biography of Ibn ‘Arabī, *al-
Qawl al-munbī ‘an tarjamat Ibn ‘Arabī. Sakhāwī notes that Biqā‘ī caught flak in his own lifetime for basing his *Nazm* on Ḥarrālī’s hermeneutics while, at the same time, being one of the most virulent critics of Ibn ‘Arabī and Ibn al-Fāriḍ. In Sakhāwī’s view, Ḥarrālī unquestionably shared the same doctrines as Ibn ‘Arabī and Ibn al-Fāriḍ (*ishtirākihi ma‘ahumā*). As far as I can see, the sole basis for Sakhāwī’s pigeonholing of Ḥarrālī as an advocate of Ibn ‘Arabī and his doctrines are the biographical notices written by Dhahabī who, as we have seen, is critical of Ḥarrālī’s rational inclinations and his (supposed) divinatory pretensions, and cites Ibn Taymīyah’s (supposed) categorization of him as a “philosophizing Sufi”. Thus, Sakhāwī places Ḥarrālī alongside a long list of figures forming a condemnable heresiological category.

Sakhāwī also demonstrates that he was familiar with the ‘*Unwān*’s positive biography of Ḥarrālī (as well as the ‘*Unwān*’s biography of Ibn ‘Arabī himself). Sakhāwī suggests that Ghubrīnī’s positive biography of Ḥarrālī is what may have enticed Biqā‘ī to embrace Ḥarrālīan hermeneutics so whole-heartedly. It should also be noted that, on Ghubrīnī’s biography of Ḥarrālī, Sakhāwī explicitly singles out the account of the encounter between Ḥarrālī and ‘Izz al-Dīn, retaining and underlining the critique of Ḥarrālī’s *tafsīr* as lacking in references to the *ṣalaf*, while refuting out of hand the claim about Ḥarrālī’s subliminal role in ‘Izz al-Dīn’s banishment (*wa-hiya ḥikāyah makdhūbah*).

Sakhāwī also mentions a defense of Ḥarrālī by a figure who appears to be Sirāj al-Dīn ‘Umar ibn Isḥāq al-Hindī (d. 773/1373). Sakhāwī’s quote of a part of Hindī’s apologia and his rebuttal against it are instructive:

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703 Sirāj al-Dīn ‘Umar ibn Isḥāq ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad…al-Ghazawī al-Hindī. Born ca. 704/1304 in India, he later spent a good part of his later career in Cairo as a Ḥanafi-affiliated *qādī* and *usūlī* author. He
Strange it is indeed that this thinker (mufakkir) [i.e. al-Hindī]—with his inferior intellect and his lack of comprehension and naql—would contest the judgement of Dhahabī, the ḥāfiẓ, who said on the subject of Harrālī: “May God have mercy on Muslims”. To which [Hindī] said: “As for intimating the permissibility of accusing Ḥarrālī of unbelief (ammā istihlāl al-ta’rīḍ bi-kufr al-Ḥarrālī), it is an utterance for which one must repent (qawlah yanbaghī al-istighfār minhā). For the accusation of unbelief is a grave matter that is prohibited unless one can furnish clear proof...”. And on the subject of those [authors] who quote from Dhahabī for the purpose of warning (taḥdhīr) [their readers] from Ḥarrālī—who falls into the same category as Ibn ‘Arabi [Hindī] said: “Verily he who speaks ill of Ḥarrālī hurts only himself, and lowers only his own status, and I do not foresee him [speaking ill of Ḥarrālī] (wa-lā arāhu yantahī) without also being dragged away by his own envy (ḥattā yajurruḥu ḥasaduhu) and by his lack of religiosity (qillat dīnih) to a terrible catastrophe (qāri’ah) whereby he becomes an [ignoble] examplar (yaṣīru bi-hā mathalan)”.704

That last phrase of Hindī may be a reference to some unknown figure(s) who criticized Harrālī posthumously. More likely, however, it is a reference to the fate of Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām, as per the famous ‘Unwān anecdote. Following the passage quoted above, Sakhāwī goes on to accuse Hindī of hypocrisy, because even as he counsels against casting aspersions on Harrālī, he himself had apparently vilified and persecuted his contemporary Ibn Abī Ḥajlah—a critic of Ibn al-Fāriḍ. Above all, what the above passage exemplifies is the tendency to readily and unthinkingly accord Dhahabī’s pronouncements an ex-cathedra status.

The next major trend in Ḥarrālī’s image in the later biographical tradition is the pushback against Dhahabī and ‘Asqalānī by the biographers like Qarāfī (d. 1600) and Munāwī (d. 1621). The latter, as stated previously, has incorporated many aspects of Ḥarrālī’s writings in his own

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704 Sakhāwī, Qawl, p. 465. The text of the Qawl is extremely convoluted. Although the flow of the text might suggest as much, the unnamed defender of Harrālī (p. 465) cannot be “Ibn Imām al-Kāmilīyah” (cited on p. 464) because the latter is an esteemed teacher of Sakhāwī and the author of a polemic against Ibn ‘Arabi (on the biography of Ibn Imām al-Kāmilīyah see the introduction to his Taysīr al-wuṣūl, vol. 1, pp. 51-95). In my estimation, the author of the apologia is indeed the figure of al-Hindī. But Sakhāwī’s discussion of this figure begins several pages previously (p. 456). In that earlier section of the text, Sakhāwī indicts Hindī for censuring the figure of Shahab al-Dīn Ibn Abī Ḥajlah, a critic of Ibn al-Fāriḍ. Sakhāwī cites a whole slew of derisive poetry against Ibn Abī Ḥajlah composed by Hindī and others (pp. 457-62). Sakhāwī appears to count Hindī among the “miserable and few” defenders of Ibn al-‘Arabi and/or Ibn al-Fāriḍ (p. 464).
works, making him probably the first biographer since Ghubrīnī to have studied a good portion of Ḥarrālī’s corpus firsthand. In addition, this new generation of biographers evidently had access to both the negative assessments of Dhahabī and ‘Asqalānī and the positive assessment of Ghubrīnī. Thus, in the 17th century there appeared for the first time historiographical critiques of the biographical literature, reasoned judgements regarding which of the two biographical trends should be privileged and why. Qarāfī writes, for example:

That which Dhahabī has cited, on the authority of anonymous sources, in regards to [Ḥarrālī’s] doctrine, is hardly credible (lā yakādu yuslam la-hu), because the author of Ḫunwān al-dirāyah was better informed on [Ḥarrālī], for the denizens of any given quarter are more informed [than outsiders] regarding their own (ahl kull qaṭr akhbar bi-ba’dihim).  

Of course, Ghubrīnī’s being well-informed on the subject of Ḥarrālī is due not just to the fact that both men hail from the Maghrib but, more importantly, because of Ghubrīnī’s having studied under Ḥarrālī’s students, as previously discussed. These later biographers are also alert to the glaring contradictions in the accounts of Dhahabī and ‘Asqalānī. On the latter, for example, Munāwī writes:

Ibn Ḥajar used to derogate [Ḥarrālī] (yaghuddu minhu), as was his habit vis-à-vis this faction. He said: the man was a philosophy-minded Sufi. He also repudiated what [Ḥarrālī] had reportedly derived [from the science of letters]. He said: The Messenger of God [himself] had no such knowledge, and these ignoramuses claim to have such knowledge. Thus, [Ibn Ḥajar] counted him among the ignorami after having already attributed to him boundless knowledge (al-ʿilm al-mufriḍ) and a becoming mannerism (ḥusn al-samt) and a great abundance of virtues.  

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705 Qarāfī, Tawshīḥ, p. 141. A similar statement is made by Maqqarī (Nafḥ, vol. 2, p. 190) who appears to base himself largely on Qarāfī’s Tawshīḥ.

Following in the same vein as Qarāfī and Munāwī, and probably basing themselves directly on them, are the biographers Aḥmad Bābā al-Timbukṭī７０７ (d. 1036/1627) and Maqqārī７０８ (d. 1041/1632). In their notices on Ḫarrālī in Nayl al-Ibtihāj７０９ and Naḥḥ al-ṭīb, respectively, both cite the ‘Unwān extensively and minimize the cogency of Dhahabī’s critiques. Its worth noting that Bābā’s own student, the qāḍī of Māknās Ibn al-Qāḍī７１０ (d. 1025/1616) does not consecrate a separate notice for Ḫarrālī in his Jadhwat al-iqtibās. Ibn al-Qāḍī’s omission appears to be due simply to a lack of biographical information on Ḫarrālī. He seems to have appended what little he knew about Ḫarrālī to the notice on Ibn ‘Arabī.７１１ Among the contexts in which Ḫarrālī’s name is cited in the Jadhwah is a discussion on the question of whether certain figures commonly associated with monist Sufism—including Ibn al-Fāriḍ, Shushtarī, Ibn Sabʿīn, ‘Afīf al-Dīn al-Tilimsānī, etc.—should be regarded as beyond the pale of Islam or whether they should


711 Cited in the Jadhwah is Ḫarrālī’s couplet aṣḥaḥtu alṭaf min murr al-naṣīmī (with Ibn ʿArabī’s response in verse). Also cited is Ḫarrālī’s line of poetry directed at a student who had cut his face on a glass bottle after a night of drinking. Elsewhere, Ḫarrālī is also mentioned as a teacher of Ibn ʿAbīd al-Anṣārī. Ibn al-Qāḍī, Jadhwah, pp. 231, 282.
be given the benefit of the doubt (*taslīm*).\(^{712}\) In fact, in this passage Ibn al-Qāḍī is merely citing and apparently agreeing with an anecdote originally related by Aḥmad Zarrūq\(^{713}\) (d. 899/1494) who, on the authority of his teacher al-Qūrī (d. 872/1467), affirms that such figures should indeed be given the benefit of the doubt. Stated in other words, one should suspend judgement regarding their orthodoxy and think well of their intentions.\(^{714}\)

One cannot discuss Ḥarrālī’s image in the later tradition without also pointing to Shushtārī’s (d. 668/1269) mention of him in his famous *Nūnīyah* poem.\(^{715}\) This rather strange ode (in the *bahr al-ṭawīl* meter) essentially gives the *isnād* of the “way” of IbnSab‘īn. As Faure writes:

> The *isnād* of the *ṭarīḵah sab‘īniyya* given by al-Shushtarī in one of his *kasīdas* shows the overlapping of the two cultures, the Greek and the Muslim, as accepted by the followers of Ibn Sab‘īn. In it, among other links, we find Plato, Aristotle, Alexander the Great, al-Ḥallād̲j̲̲, al-Shūd̲h̲ārī, who as a mystic was the teacher of that strange character al-Suhrawardī, and Abū Madyan. In [t]his initiatory chain, Hellenistic philosophy and Muslim *taṣawwuf* are linked together under the patronage of Hermes, the spokesman of the gods and their messenger to men.\(^{716}\)

Towards the end of the poem, Shushtārī cites a motley succession of Islamic figures, including Ibn Sīnā, al-Ṭūsī (= Ghazālī?), Ibn Ṭufayl, Ibn Rushd, Ibn ‘Arabī, and Ibn al-Fārid. Indeed, the next figure cited is Ḥarrālī, who is the penultimate figure in the *silsilah* that culminates in Ibn Sab‘īn himself. The line dedicated to Ḥarrālī reads:

> And the scion\(^{717}\) of Ḥarrālī fell passionately in love with it when (*wa-hāma bi-hi najl al-Harrālī ‘indamā*)


\(^{713}\) On Zarrūq see Kugle, “*Zarrūq*”, in EI3.


\(^{716}\) Faure, “*Ibn Sab‘īn*”, in EI2.

\(^{717}\) I long wondered whether the expression “*najl al-Harrālī*” was a reference not to Ḥarrālī himself but rather to one of his students, that is, his intellectual and spiritual progeny—the brilliant Ibn Rabī’ comes to mind, for example, especially given that in the ‘*Unwān* he is linked with Ibn Sab‘īn. However, earlier
He saw in concealing it a weakness, and in revealing it a concealment (raʿā katmahu ʿaftan wa-
taṣrīḥahu ghaynā) The mysterious “it” here is the knowledge and the wisdom that the Nūnīyah depicts as being passed down through generations of eminent Greek and Muslim sages. The above translation is by no means certain. For one thing, some of the words vary significantly from source to source, not to speak of the outlandishness of the poem as a whole.

Shushtari’s poem may be the reason why Munāwī, alone among biographers, identifies Ḥarrālī as one of Ibn Sabʿīn’s teachers. As far as direct references to Ḥarrālī, I have found none in any of Ibn Sabʿīn’s edited works. However, there may be at least one reference to Ḥarrālī in Ibn Sabʿīn’s manuscript on lettrism: Sharḥ Kanz al-mughrimīn. Ḥarrālī’s image in the Far Maghrib, his place of origin, goes through a remarkable slide into obscurity over the centuries until the present day. Perhaps this is because this image was never a very clear one to begin with, owing to Ḥarrālī’s early emigration to the Mashriq, the laconic notice dedicated to him in Ibn Abbār’s (d. 1260) Takmilah, the apparent lack of circulation early

in the poem Shushtari uses the same term (najl) in referencing both Ibn Sīnā and Ibn Masarrah. This means it is unlikely that the term is being used in the sense of “son” or “progeny” but rather in some other mysterious sense, or for meter purposes.

In the same breath, Munāwī also claims that Ibn Sabʿīn was tutored by the lettrist Būnī; the latter does not appear to be mentioned in Shushtari’s Nūnīyah. Munāwī, Kawākib, vol. 2, p. 442.

Ibn Sabʿīn, Sharḥ Kanz al-mughrimīn, Houghton Library, Harvard University, MS Arab 204, fol. 24a. The name is transcribed as al-Jūlī (no vocalization). The ownership statement is signed by a figure who probably lived in Sabtah (= al-Sabṭī). The manuscript was copied in the year 1001/1593. At this time in the Maghrib, Ḥarrālī was probably not a widely known figure, which may explain the mistranscription of his name. Ibn Sabʿīn cites Ḥarrālī (= al-Jūlī) in the context of his commentary on the symbolic significance of the letter qāf. What is stated in Ibn Sabʿīn’s Sharḥ correlates closely (but not exactly) to what Ḥarrālī says on the significance of the same letter in his al-Lamḥah, BNF 1398, fols. 29b-30a. Ibn Sabʿīn’s Sharḥ also mentions the lettrist Būnī on one or two occasions, although I neglected to make a note of the relevant folios.
on of Ghubrīnī’s ‘Unwān, and Ḥarrālī’s complete absence from Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik al-Marrakushī’s (d. 1303) Dhayl.

The relative obscurity of Ḥarrālī and his works in the far Maghrib from early on illustrated by Ibn ‘Ajībah’s (d. 1808) commentary on Shushtārī’s Nūnīyah. Titled Sharḥ Nūnīyah al-imām al-Shushtārī, Ibn ‘Ajībah is clearly not familiar with the biography of Ḥarrālī. The little biographical information cited by Ibn ‘Ajībah is on the authority of Zarrūq’s (d. 899/1494) commentary on the Nūnīyah, which for its part relies on the ‘Unwān and the Sabk. The general lack of knowledge about Ḥarrālī in the Far Maghrib can also be seen in the previously mentioned Moroccan manuscripts of his work al-Nūṣḥ al-‘ām, where the statement of ascription is biographically laconic.

720 In Ibn ‘Ajībah, Rasā‘īl, pp. 67-140. Ḥarrālī cited on p. 137. Ibn ‘Ajībah’s commentary on the meaning of the verse that mentions Ḥarrālī is useful and more or less supports our translation and commentary above.

721 Zarrūq’s commentary has long been in manuscript (Rabat: KhM 10454 fols. 39-64, and KhM 5693, cited in Kuggle, Rebel, p. 281). An edition has very recently been published (Zarrūq, Sharḥ al-Nūnīyah wa-al-muqaṭṭa‘at al-shushtāriyāh, Bayrūt, 2019) but I have not been able to obtain a copy. Zarrūq’s reliance on the Sabk is mentioned in the editor’s introduction to Ibn Ṭawwāḥ, Sabk, p. 33.
CONCLUSION

One could be forgiven for expecting the finale of a monograph as highly specialized as the foregoing one to proffer sweeping assessments and definitive contextualizations of its primary subject. Yet the greater work that remains to be done is the systematic analysis of Ḥarrālī’s texts, which was excluded from the scope of this study for obvious methodological reasons. Even if throughout the present work a few of Ḥarrālī’s aphorisms and lines of poetry have been cited, and his works summarily described, such efforts fall well short of doing justice to his rich and multi-faceted written legacy. The main objective of the above study was to uncover the biographical and prosopographical context out of which those writings emerged. This preliminary task was determined to be imperative if future textual studies are to properly grasp the import of a corpus that expresses novel ideas in a language that is often dense, abstract, and devoid of intellectually-orientating references.

On Ḥarrālī’s biography, everything that can be known—or that is worth knowing—has been deposited in this study. Wrung from nearabout every conceivable extant source, the chronology and the geography of Ḥarrālī’s life have been coordinated to the utmost extent possible given the present availability of resources. Comparable work has been carried out with respect to many of the secondary characters in this story—figures about whom previously very little was known. The sum of these efforts amount to discrete vignettes that shine a light that is, at once, radially restricted to the prosopographical phenomena related to Ḥarrālī’s circle yet still manages to illuminate various intellectual circles across a broad swathe of the 13th century Arabic-speaking Islamic world.

As for the propographical context, several important areas of influence were identified that should help inform later studies of Ḥarrālī’s works. In his formative years, Ḥarrālī bore the
influence of a reformed Mālikī legal culture that, in the course of conforming itself to the Sunni internationalism, had come to be deeply influenced by the *uṣūl* methodologies developed by Shāfīʿī masters in the Mashriq. To the *uṣūl* movement in the Muslim West, perhaps no single text was more important than Ghazālī’s *Iḥyāʾ*, which so many of the figures in Ḥarrālī’s intellectual lineage upheld as quasi-sacred. By Ḥarrālī’s time, the field of *uṣūl al-dīn* had also made great strides in the Maghrib. In this domain he had as mentors staunch promoters of Ashʿarī theology, especially as articulated in Juwaynī’s *Irshād*. By later teaching *kalām* in Bijāyah and in Ifrīqiyya, and also by allegedly writing a lost commentary on the *Irshād*, Ḥarrālī appears to have had a hand in furthering this tradition and even creating an irregular West-to-East counter-current of influence.

Ḥarrālī also erected new structures upon the *uṣūl* movement. His *Miftāḥ*, billed as a work on *uṣūl al-tafsīr*, may be conceived of at least in part as a prolongation of the *uṣūl* movement of the Maghrib, the natural culmination of the progressive advent of *uṣūl al-fiqh* and *uṣūl al-dīn* in the Muslim West. In part, Ḥarrālī’s works may thus be seen as one of the innovative achievements of Almohad intellectual culture. He was after all a student of Ibn al-Qaṭṭān who, as official head of the *talabah* corps, was a figure emblematic of Almohad bureaucracy. Ḥarrālī’s deep command of Arabic and his frequent etymological references in his corpus also reflect the belletrist environment of the Almohad Maghrib in which he had his professional debut.

In terms of *tašawwuf*, Ḥarrālī was an indirect inheritor of the way of Abū Madyan, the seminal figure of early Maghribī Sufism who fused Andalusian strands of *tašawwuf* with principles derived from classical Mashriqī mystical texts like Makkī’s *Qūt al-qulūb*, Qurshayrī’s *Risālah*, and Muḥāsibī’s *al-Riʾāyah li-ḥuqūq Allāh*. Ḥarrālī bore this line of influence through Abū al-Ṣabr al-Fihrī of Sabtah, an early associate of Abū Madyan in the Maghrib, as well as
through Abū Yūsuf al-Dahmānī and Abū Saʻīd al-Bājī, direct disciples of Abū Madyan who had studied with the latter in Bijāyah and formed an influential Sufi network in Ifrīqiyā. At this early stage, however, Maghribī tašawwuf was a far more informal and decentralized phenomenon. This means that individual authorities were free to formulate their own distinctive method and give expression to their unique spiritual vision. Thus, in spite of any indirect influence, Ḥarrālī’s own brand of spiritual wisdom was conceived as the unique product of his own spiritual vision and was received by posterity as a tradition disintinct from that of Abū Madyan.

From a doctrinal standpoint, Ḥarrālī was also the heir of the Almerian school of Sufism and of the Andalusian mu’tabirūn tradition as articulated most notably by Ibn ‘Arīf and Ibn Barrajān. As this study has shown, 12th century Andalusian mystical currents exerted a powerful intellectual influence on early Maghribī Sufism via the key figure of Ibn Ghālib and his two primary disciples ‘Abd al-Jalīl al-Qaṣrī and Abū al-Ṣabr al-Sabtī. Though the latter, who was Ḥarrālī’s direct mentor, does not appear to have left behind any extant works, the former’s Shu‘ab al-īmān and his still-in-manuscript tafsīr would be worth investigating for potential parallels with the works of Ḥarrālī. Obviously, the influence of the figures from that earlier generation should also be expected: aspects of Ibn Barrajān’s Qur’ān hermeneutics, for example, will almost certainly have reverberations in the exegetical writings of Ḥarrālī.

The possible inter-religious encounters of the Persian-cum-Cairene Sufi al-Fakhr Fārisī may have helped shape the pluralist outlook of Ḥarrālī as expressed in his letter to the Tarragona archbishop. Determining the broader nature of the doctrinal influence of this notable of Ayyūbid Cairo will have to await the appearance of separate studies and editions of his works. On the other hand, the effect of the exegete Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qurṭūbī on Ḥarrālī’s Qur’ān hermeneutics may never be fully ascertained, simply because he does not appear to have
committed his teachings to paper. It would, however, be worthwhile to inspect the works of Qurṭubī’s spiritual mentor, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qurashī, the titles of which suggest they revolve around the subjects of taṣawwuf and Qur’ān hermeneutics. In future analyses of Ḥarrālī’s tafsīr and Miftāḥ, it would also be worth bearing in mind certain exegetical texts of a more mainstream appeal like Zamakhsharī’s Kashshāf and Ibn ‘Atīyah’s Muḥarrar, since these two works were among the Qur’ān commentaries heavily studied and commented upon by some of Ḥarrālī’s students, including the Granadan courtier Ibn al-ʿĀbid and the Ibrīqiyan uṣūli Ibn Bazīzah.

This study has also revealed some of the tensions that effected Ḥarrālī’s professional career. At the urging of his spiritual mentors and no doubt also out of personal conviction, Ḥarrālī internalized the classical Sufi virtues of total reliance on God (tawakkul) the relinquishment of the promethean pretension of individual agency and self-determination (isqāṭ al-tadbīr). Besides leading a life of material poverty, these attitudes may have also led Ḥarrālī to act against his own professional interests by spurning career-enhancing strategies like self-promotion, ingratiating himself with the political class, cultivating utilitarian alliances with fellow scholars. Ḥarrālī’s ascetic posture thus may have had an overall detrimental effect on his wider reformist objectives.

It’s worth noting that the Ibrīqiyan Sufi masters—Dahmānī and Bājī—who may have had a hand in instilling in Ḥarrālī the Sufi ideals of self-abnegation and world-renunciation, themselves did not intend to intervene in the world of traditional religious scholarship. Their calling was first and foremost spiritual mentorship; and in that sense they were highly successful. But it wouldn’t occur to them, nor might they have had the scholarly wherewithal, to go toe-to-toe with career legists on the technicalities of Mālikī fiqh, as Ḥarrālī had done. Ḥarrālī may have also been inspired by the memory of mystically-inclined theologians of Fez, like Ibn al-Kattānī and Salāljī—bashful characters who consciously shunned scholarly fame and political opportunity,
but upon whom Almohad patronage was practically foisted. Yet their success in maintaining their politically introverted orientations and their ethically unblemished character—while still exerting a deep influence on their intellectual environment—owes much to the particular social conditions of the Fez milieu and the propitious circumstances of the early period of Almohad political consolidation. With an initerant career spanning so many different geo-political climates, Ḥarrālī might have helped himself better had he tempered his spiritual idealism with a degree of savvy prudence and clear-eyed pragmatism.

A recurring theme in the present study, which is related to the above-described ethos of humility, is the existence of figures whose outsize intellectual influence is indicated by the biographical literature but also belied by the lack of a tangible written legacy. These figures, who prioritized the day-to-day oral instruction of disciples and channeled their creativity primarily on the inter-personal plane, feature heavily in Ḥarrālī’s intellectual lineage: Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qurṭubī, Ibn al-Kattānī, and Abū al-Ṣabr al-Fihrī are good examples. Several of Ḥarrālī’s students were also of this self-effacing mold, including the brighter, more creative ones. This phenomena also seems especially prevalent in the Muslim West, or at least touches figures who are of mostly Maghribī origin. Thus, one of the problems this study has grappled with is that of situating and properly appraising the legacies of deeply humble figures who, being acutely aware of the enduring self-publicizing power of the written word, deliberately curtailed their literary output in an effort to suppress their own prosopographical footprint. As intellectual historians striving for ever-greater levels of historiographical accuracy and comprehensiveness, how do we account for those who did not want to be accounted for? Is it possible to develop critical tools sensitive enough to register the faint shadows of such figures and reconstruct their true, proportional statures?
Finally, an important aspect of Ḥarrālī’s scholarly orientation which the present study has begun to uncover, and which will be useful to bear in mind in future studies of his texts, is his reform-minded desire for greater inter-disciplinary harmony. In this sense, a paramount pointer is Ghubrīnī’s observation that Ḥarrālī’s intellectual endeavors were geared toward the “rehabilitation of the religious sciences and of the ulama” (ḥalāḥ ʿilm wa-al-ʿulamā’). In effect, Ḥarrālī doesn’t appear to have been an out-and-out mystical author concerned solely with expressing the deepest esoteric truths to a small circle of like-minded adepts. Rather, he was fundamentally committed to engaging with mainstream religious scholarship. This is attested to by the numerous legist-oriented students who adhered to him over the course of his career, especially in Bijāyah. Also telling in this regard is the polyvalent range of works authored by Ḥarāllī. Even his treatises on the science of letters are written in a sober, openly didactic textbook style.

Ḥarrālī wasn’t just trying to harmonize the exoteric and esoteric perspectives—in the 13th century Maghribī context, ṭaṣawwuf and traditional religious scholarship may not have been as sharply at odds with each other as in other historical and cultural contexts. Still, from a historiographical perspective, it is possible to differentiate between the two worlds and to recognize that “keeping the peace” between them was an ongoing balancing act that is more distinctly at work in the career of particular individuals. In this sense, the figures of Abū al-Šabr al-Fihrī and Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qurṭubī are exemplary models of that ability to harmonize and move comfortably between the exoteric and esoteric spheres. Tellingly, both occupy a prominent position in Ḥarrālī’s intellectual lineage.

In an analogous sense, Ḥarrālī can be described as attempting to harmonize the spheres of naql and ʿaql, or as they are sometimes referred to in the North African context, the fields of

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riwāyah and dirāyah. In the dirāyah sphere, he was trying to reaffirm the importance of praxis as well as of methodological groundedness in the primary scriptural sources. In the riwāyah sphere, he was trying to make room for more immediate epistemological resources like personal intuition, divine inspiration, and perhaps even select elements of Aristotelian logic and peripatetic philosophy.

Ḥarrālī exemplifies the vitality of post-Ghazālīan Sufi thought in a modality that was original and independent of Ibn ‘Arabī, but which subsequently may have became eclipsed by, or subtly absorbed into, the tradition broadly referred to as the Akbarian “school”. As well, Ḥarrālī’s name seems to have become implicated in later polemics revolving around Ibn ‘Arabī—unfairly in my view because few, if any, of Ḥarrālī’s critics appear to have been directly acquainted with his writings, let alone substantively engaged with them. The irony here is that, while many of the ideas that Ḥarrālī promoted can be shown to be analogous with those expressed by Ibn ‘Arabī, Ḥarrālī appears to have intentionally attempted to re-conceptualize aspects of Sufi doctrine in more ideologically neutral language. Similarly, Ḥarrālī’s famous disinclination towards citing sources or referring to well-known authorities may also have been intended as a means of circumventing hardened discursive pathways and long-established ideological prejudices.

Bearing in mind Ḥarrālī’s ambiguous position in later polemical debates, one question that future textual studies should be expected to shed light on is how his ideas could become wholeheartedly adopted by Biqā’ī, an otherwise intransigent, sharī‘ah-minded figure known for his vituperative criticism of the legacies of other mystics from that same generation, namely, Ibn ‘Arabī and Ibn al-Fāriḍ. Thus, what is needed is to identify the specific rhetorical strategies employed by Ḥarrālī that rendered his hermeneutical ideas intelligible and palatable to a scholar
like Biqāʾī. The historiographical problem involved here is analogous to the one described above regarding the difficulty of properly appraising the intellectual legacies of figures who left little or no written record. In this case, the problem involves accounting for the more elusive, integrative phenomenon of harmonization in intellectual history, as opposed to that of documenting the Islamic tradition’s more visible ideological fissures and its hottest polemical flashpoints. For while the latter is unquestionably a vital historiographical task, it is equally important, though much trickier, to register the phenomenon of ideological harmonization, a more subtle process that is ultimately responsible for maintaining the core integrity of the Islamic tradition through the ages.
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